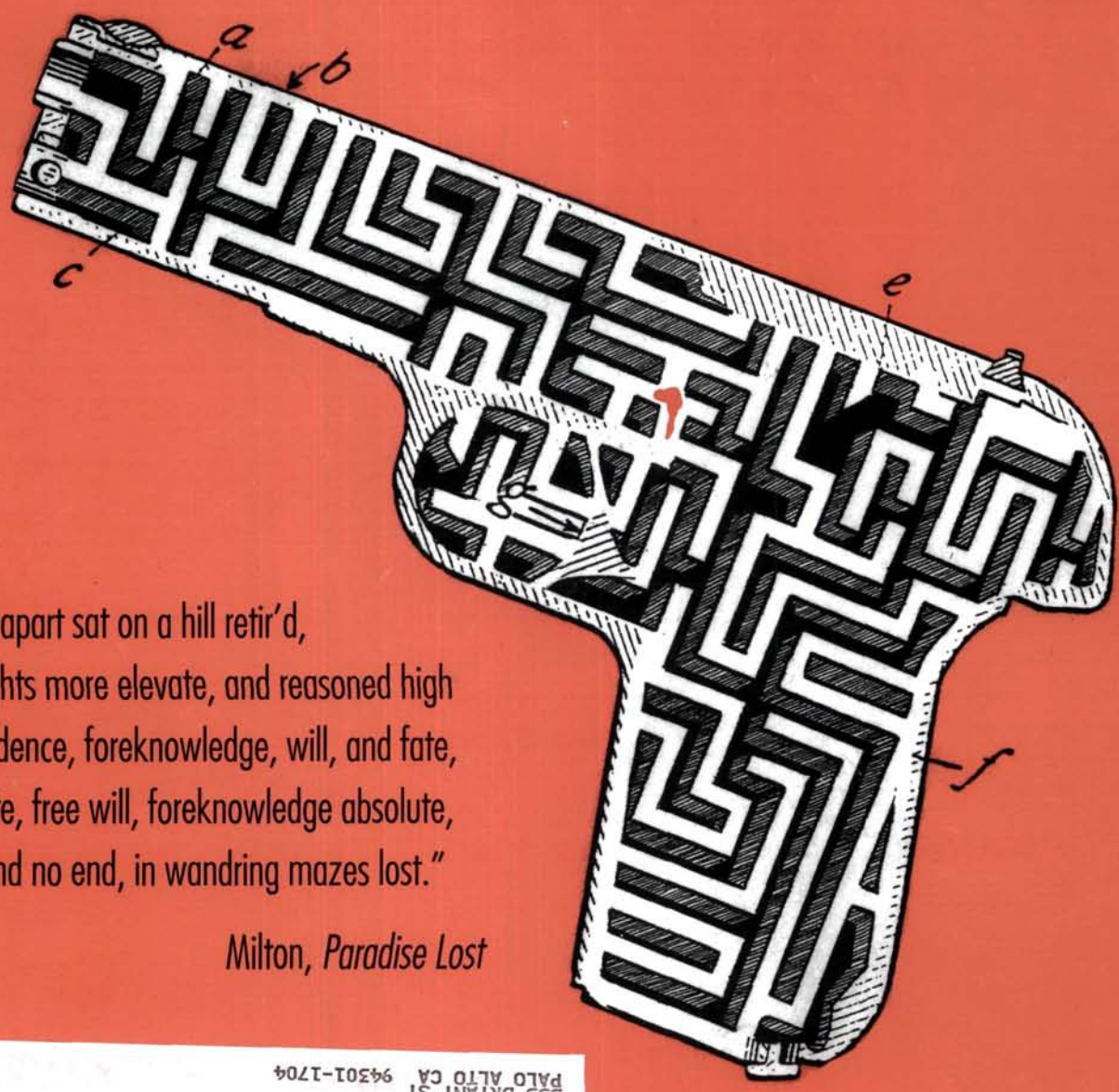
Chronicles

January 1995 A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE $2.95

Lost in the Maze

Crime in America



"Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandring mazes lost."

Milton, *Paradise Lost*

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Higher Education

Mary Pride's informed prediction of technology's radical transformation of higher education ("Hire Education," September 1994) incorrectly noted that I advocated "cutting professors' salaries." In *How Professors Play the Cat Guarding the Cream: Why We're Paying More and Getting Less in Higher Education* (George Mason University Press, 1992), I lacked the courage to invoke spousal rage by calling for less pay. I demanded more work.

Differential faculty teaching loads is one of seven reforms designed to help universities do a better job at less cost. The mechanism for this reform is performance accounting, which measures teaching, research, administration, and service to the community. Some professors teach more hours, others fewer to meet a departmental mandate. One reason for universities' poor productivity is the false assumption that when teaching hours are reduced for everyone in a department there will be a corresponding increase in everyone's research productivity. The differential scholarly contributions of some cannot compensate for the equal teaching loads of all.

But who cares? Faculty resistance to accountability is a reckless invitation to professor-bashers to phase out the academic fortification and job security of tenure. Let the next generation of scholars suffer the insecurities of contract employment!

—*Richard M. Huber*
Washington, D.C.

On Neoconservatives and the Religious Right

Samuel Francis's remarks ("The Abortion Gambit," October 1994) on the efforts by neoconservatives, especially Bill Kristol, to co-opt the religious right are convincingly presented. Francis rightly notes that Kristol, Bennett, and other neocon movers and shakers are working to control the religious right and thereby to provide themselves with a mass base that they would not otherwise have. Francis is also correct that neocons are presenting the religious right as innocuous representatives of "family values," less to sell them to the electorate than to push them toward nonradical mainstream views. If the neocons succeed, as Francis perceptively argues, the religious right will abandon its radical stands and become mere neocon pawns in the Washington power game.

On these points, I must tip my hat to him for knowing the enemy so well. Where I disagree is on his judgments about the religious right. There is nothing in its current rhetoric that could make me think twice about leaving it as a gift package to Bill and Irving. At the Christian Coalition gathering on September 16, the liberal *New York Times* columnist Frank Rich heard so much public praise of Martin Luther King that he thought he had wandered onto a Freedom Bus. Though Bill Kristol and George Weigel may have ulterior motives for doing so, it is they and not the religious right, as Francis concedes, who have taken the paleoconservative position on abortion. The religious right's insistence on an antiabortion amendment (together with one allowing for school prayer) shows lack of regard for the power of the states, as protected under the Constitution. It also confirms what I noticed about the religious right in Washington: its desperation to find public sector jobs for its members and friends. It is they who illustrate at least as well as the neocons the perils of "big government conservatism."

Long before Bill Kristol swooned over them, religious rightists were already embracing such bona fide neocons as Cal Thomas, Jack Kemp, and Bill Bennett. Last year Christian Coalition members, though not its leaders, wildly applauded a speech by Pat Buchanan, but this year the coalition paid *enthusiastic* homage to Kristol handlee (pardon the neologism) Dan Quayle and joined the media cult of Martin Luther King. Though some of those present may exemplify Francis's "Middle American Radicals," the religious right, with which they are now identified, seems made for a neocon takeover. I agree with Francis that the religious right can fuel a right-wing populist movement, but that can be the case only if traditionalists leave the religious right for a more intelligent and more consistently rightist politics. Ollie North, whom the neocons opposed in the Virginia senatorial race, may have been

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doing exactly this; when asked whether he favored what is presumably the religious right position on creationism, getting the state to impose it on local schools, North responded that he believed local school boards should decide philosophical questions for themselves. North also distinguished himself from the religious right by what he didn't do: not compare *Roe* v. *Wade* to *Dred Scott*, not sentimentalize Martin Luther King and Jack Kemp, and not recommend that federal agencies deal with the nation's moral agenda.

—Paul Gottfried
Elizabethtown, PA

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

WELFARE BENEFITS for illegal aliens must be eliminated, said Californians, and with Proposition 187 they did just this. Voters thus reaffirmed a basic principle of common-sense public policy: foreign lawbreakers should not be entitled to live off the earnings of productive citizens. Surely everyone can agree on this much.

Not quite. Bill Bennett and Jack Kemp, pillars of D.C.'s Empower America, jetted out of the Beltway for a few days in late October to plead with Californians to vote *no* on Proposition 187. Bill and Jack think it is just fine to squander $2.4 billion per year on welfare for illegals.

"For some, immigrants have become a popular political and social scapegoat," the joint statement said, implying that it is wicked to want to keep what you earn. "The Republican Party helped to create a Democratic base in many of America's cities with its hostile stand toward the last generation of immigrants from Italy, Ireland, and the nations of Central Europe."

"It's bad stuff. It is poison in a democracy," added Bennett. Proposition 187 "corrodes the soul," Kemp chimed in, adding this prediction: "If this passes in California, it will be introduced in other states and people will want to put it in the 1996 platform." Oh, scary. Harold Ezell, the coauthor of the measure, was bewildered, but offered this theory to explain their behavior: "Clinton must have written their press release."

People wonder why Bennett and Kemp are losing political influence in the GOP to a new generation of activists with radically different views. This fiasco shows why.

—Jeffrey Tucker

BILL BENNETT seems determined to illustrate the old saw that generals are always fighting the last war. As the infantry struggles to arrest the invasion of special privileges for sodomites, now comes the order from the rear to give up the current battle and engage a "new" enemy: divorce. Speaking to the Christian Coalition in October, Mr. Bennett advised his audience to cease hectoring homosexuals and offered this rationale: "If you look in terms of the damage done to children in America you cannot compare what the homosexual movement, the gay rights movement, has done with what divorce has done to this society."

Ignore for a moment Mr. Bennett's curious reasoning. The truth is that the vast majority of Americans have no interest in corralling homosexuals and enforcing sodomy laws. What the pro-homosexual lobby has dishonestly dubbed "homophobia" is, in fact, a rejection of the homosexual aristocracy determined to put *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* in the public schools, enforce hiring quotas for homosexuals, and further garnish American wages in pursuit of a cure for a virus whose petri dish is bad behavior. If a reluctance to put a potential pedophile in front of a pack of young Boy Scouts constitutes "homophobia," what shall we call a reluctance to put a blind man in the cockpit of a jumbo jet?

And will quitting this fight reverse the national retreat from marriage? Well, as another old saw goes: Mr. Bennett is a day late and a dollar short. The divorce war is over, and America lost. Almost half of new marriages end in divorce; 20 percent of divorces involve marriages of over 15 years; 60 percent of marriages made today are likely to end in divorce. Yet the real proof that the war ended long ago is the terms on which Mr. Bennett wishes today to join the fight. For those of us who consider divorce a metaphysical impossibility, discussing the harmful effects of divorce on children is almost irrelevant, and even dangerous. Indeed, piling statistical data, even on the side of truth, implies that the issue merits debate. Imagine an argument against driving a hunting knife through one's heart because a Center for Disease Control study found a "statistically significant link between the insertion of a large knife through the human heart and a variety of adverse bodily reactions."

It is difficult to swallow Mr. Bennett's implication that we can handle only one evil at a time: quit fighting homosexuals because now we have to fight divorce. Many Americans, I suspect, can think about more than one thing at once, and, for a man who pushes his classical education before him in a wheelbarrow, he should be able to handle two concepts at the same time. Actually, sodomy and divorce are really one concept: hatred of Christian marriage.

Accepting, however, "Bennett's rule of political and cultural discourse" (one topic per person per day), he may have made the comment to the wrong crowd. The Christian Coalition embraces this notion of indissoluble marriage, so even if the rest of us need to devote our full attention to keeping our marriages together, they, at least, are free to keep fighting homosexual activists.

Sodomy, it seems, is only part of a growing list of vices Mr. Bennett recommends we ignore. His advice to Republicans concerning abortion? "The legal issues are settled for now. This is a long-term cultural struggle. So talk about other things." While it sounds as if Mr. Bennett ought to reread (read?) his chapter on perseverance ("Stick to your task, though the pace seems slow / You may succeed with one more blow"), we might assume that his comment on abortion was intended to court—or at least not alienate—the pro-choice vote. But whose vote is he trying to court with his promotion of homosexual rights? Ten percent of America? Perhaps in all his research on divorce, Mr. Bennett missed the study from the University of Chicago that puts the figure substantially lower. (And why is abortion a lost cause but not divorce?)

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If abandoning the defensive war against homosexual rights was a ploy to win votes, Mr. Bennett ought to reflect that he is running the risk of offending far greater numbers by criticizing divorcés.

Divorce is harming more children than homosexuality. It is also true that, in the race for public acceptance, divorce had something of a head start on sodomy. But homosexuality seems to be catching up, particularly at the parties of New York conservatives where, as "gaycon" Bruce Bawer observes, the atmosphere is that of a gay bar.

We might wonder how much else is explained by Mr. Bawer's observation: David Brock's obsessive tabloid pieces on Anita Hill and Bill Clinton's womanizing; Republican welfare-reform packages that drive mothers into the workforce and offer no tax relief for families; the continued popularity of the *New Republic* in conservative "households"; and—most disturbing of all—the perverse idea that the federal government has the right to protect "minorities" from community discrimination. Should Mr. Bennett wish to distance himself from this crowd, he might reissue his book and include a chapter on chastity.

—*Christopher Check*

EDWARD MACDOWELL, the composer and pianist, founded with his wife Marian (also a fine pianist) the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire, for the purpose of providing seclusion, privacy, and leisure to artists and writers, who inhabit small cabins scattered through the wooded hills of the former MacDowell property. For almost 60 years, that is what happened. But in recent years the management has undergone a change, with the result that a New York crowd with politically correct notions and perverse aesthetic values has moved in and taken over. Although New Hampshire citizens continue faithfully to support the colony, it seems to have a policy of excluding artists and writers who actually dwell in New Hampshire. Last year, for example, the annual award for artistic achievement went to Jasper Johns, a South Carolina expatriate living in New York. You could have attended the award ceremony by following the directions printed on the invitation: Peterborough is west of Keene and east of Manchester. Unfortunately, Peterborough is exactly the other way around, east of Keene and west of Manchester. In geography as in aesthetics the colony, it would seem, continues to steer 180 degrees wrong.

—*William F. Rickenbacker*

WITH CHRISTOPHER LASCH'S death last March, our society lost a probing and principled critic. According to one by now standard biography, Lasch started his career as an antiwar activist and Marxist-Freudian synthesizer and by the end of his life had moved to the right with a defense of traditional communities. There is truth in this account, as anyone who knew and read Lasch can testify, but equally important, there were striking continuities in his work. Whatever else Lasch was, he fought relentlessly against the liberal tradition. And by that tradition he understood not only the latest p.c. outrage but the beliefs in individual gratification and the profit motive as the foundations of social life.

In a cascade of books from the 70's on, including *The Minimal Self*, *The Culture of Narcissism*, and *The True and Only Heaven*, Lasch lamented the liberal presuppositions of American politics and culture. Americans, he maintained, had sacrificed the value of community to pursue self-centered pleasure and material riches. Our greatest writers, he explained, had observed this problem, and some had come to view it as an inescapable fate. In his later writings, particularly in a spirited piece for *Harper's*, Lasch had also gone after the feminists; and in his last book, he even dared to castigate an icon for both liberals and conservatives, neoconservative hero Martin Luther King, Jr., for demanding that the federal government alter the residential patterns of urban ethnics. But all of these strictures, especially those directed against the alliance of big business and the managerial state, reflect a premise found in Lasch's early work, that liberal individualism saps communal life and prepares the way for administrative, therapeutic tyranny.

Lasch became a personal friend of mine, despite the untoward circumstances of our first meeting. As a candidate for an associate professorship at the University of Rochester more than 20 years ago, I encountered him as an illustrious senior member of the history department. Lasch opposed my candidacy, seeing in me a potential instrument of an enemy faction. (His political judgment was, by the way, entirely correct.) When we met again in what turned out to be the twilight of his career, we discussed his fateful opposition to me. I assured him that he had quite properly acted in self-defense, though his action had ended for me any possibility of professional advancement. Lasch disagreed. He spoke of the need to turn enemies into friends, and he noted that our friendship might have begun sooner if he had supported rather than opposed me.

Balancing his feistiness was the other side of Lasch's personality, his proverbial kindliness toward family members, friends, and students. A warm disposition was the characteristic that those closest to him remember best. And though descended from a distinguished St. Louis publishing family and the son-in-law of the historian Henry Steele Commager, Lasch reveled in the company of working stiffs. He was a populist not only in his politics but also in his genuine appreciation of unabashed Middle Americans. Unlike those ersatz communitarians who wish to construct victim-friendly settings with the aid of government agencies, Lasch did not look to coercive sensitizers to restore the social good. By community he meant what the Germans call *Gemeinschaft*, organic associations derived from kinship and a

LIBERAL ARTS

THE ENEMY WITHIN

The United States government continues to resettle Iraqi POWs as refugees in the United States, reported *Border Watch* last summer. Despite protests from members of Congress and veterans groups, nearly a thousand Iraqi soldiers were approved for resettlement in 1994, at a cost that may run as high as $70 million; their refugee status entitles them to full welfare benefits. While officials maintain that most of these Iraqi POWs did not invade Kuwait or fight American troops, they have not adequately screened them to determine the exact nature of their role in the Gulf War.

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shared history. Though Lasch was willing to accept variations on this model, given the present shattered condition of the real article, he rejected academic redefinitions of what community is about. Least of all did he view it as a collection of itinerant yuppies and sexual deviants looking for an idol to replace the god that failed.

A certifiable Brahmin, he nonetheless appealed to those uncorrupted by wealth or academic pretension. Both his celebration of the lower middle class and his yearning for a localist, family-based socialism show the unseasonable nature of his antiliberal radicalism. More distributist than leftist and more traditionalist than would be tolerable to our official right, Lasch defies simplistic labeling. He also continues to be a source of inspiration to those on the true right, those of us whose conservatism has nothing to do with the defense of multinational consumerism.

—*Paul Gottfried*

SOLZHENITSYN has finally returned to Mother Russia after 18 years in the United States. Given that he did more than any other individual to help bring down communism, it is strange that so many Americans are still puzzled by this man and unfamiliar with his work. This is partly due to Solzhenitsyn's decision to live a reclusive life deep in the woods of Vermont. When leaving, he thanked his fellow Vermonters for respecting his seclusion. For a state so respectful of individual liberties and privacy, that was not such a hard thing to do. But for a man who helped bring down the Soviet Empire, why does his name remain a mystery to some, and an enigma to others? The answer, as it so often does, lies in the lower depths of politics.

Solzhenitsyn was a Soviet soldier during World War II when he was arrested for expressing frustrations about the war in private letters. The fact that he was arrested was not unusual, for millions of his fellow countrymen were also carted off to the Gulag. What distinguished Solzhenitsyn was the fact that he lived to tell his tale about Stalin's purges and the Soviet reign of terror. His words shook the foundations of history's most brutal regime. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* was a fictional account of what the average day was like for someone in a Soviet concentration camp.

As chilling as that story was, nothing was so terrifying and monumental as his masterful work, *The Gulag Archipelago*. Chronicling the purges of the 1920's through the 1950's, Solzhenitsyn traces the root of the Soviet disease back to Lenin and the communist utopian ideal of a "new society" and a new "Soviet Man." That social experiment led to the extermination of over 40 million people. The numbers are almost too staggering to comprehend. *The Gulag Archipelago*, although virtually ignored in America, destroyed the European left's faith in the Soviet model. The dream of a new society was dead, its foundations, built on the bones of millions, were crumbling.

But what about America? The left, always sympathetic to the Soviet Union, had long apologized for the murders, forced famines, and purges. Leftists viewed Solzhenitsyn as a traitor, and often dismissed him as a lunatic. When I was in college in the 1980's, a professor told me in response to a question about Solzhenitsyn, "He has his merits as a writer of fiction, but as a historian of the Soviet Union he has no credibility." (This professor is still hailed on Chicago TV as a Russian "expert.")

But it was not only the left that shied away from Solzhenitsyn. During five administrations he was never invited to the White House. Even Ronald Reagan, of "Evil Empire" fame, refused to invite Solzhenitsyn. It was thought to be too risky; it might upset the Soviet leadership. God forbid.

If the left viewed Solzhenitsyn as a traitor, many on the right were suspicious of his leanings toward a Russia ruled by a divine monarch—a Romanov restoration. Solzhenitsyn was very critical of the West and its slavish devotion to materialism. He feared that a society that turns away from God, in pursuit of instant gratification, will lead to decadence and despair. And considering the social and cultural problems plaguing the Godless West, can anyone deny that it is less safe, more uncivil, and yes, more decadent today?

Solzhenitsyn is a man caught out of his time. He harkens back to 19th-century Imperial Russia, the land of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. But his warnings to the West remain relevant and should at least be understood, if not heeded. His hope for divine intervention for his homeland—and for ours—should be prayed for by all.

—*Michael Finch*

OBITER DICTA: The John Randolph Club meeting held in Arlington, Virginia, last fall dealt with America's changing national character. A host of conservative and libertarian luminaries discussed various aspects of "the American identity"—its origins, its evolution, and its current predicament. In the opening address on Friday night, economist Murray Rothbard, one of two recipients of the 1994 Ingersoll Prizes, criticized the Libertarian movement for abandoning its commitment to individual liberty. On Saturday, Llewellyn Rockwell, Sam Francis, Peter Brimelow, Chris Kopff, and other noted conservative thinkers addressed topics as diverse (pardon the term) as "America's Classical Heritage," "American Balkanization," "Exporting Democracy," "The Bricker Amendment," and "Cultureless Multiculturalism." After dinner, six guests engaged in a lively (not to say heated) debate on the proposition that the federal government has a duty to protect individual liberties. Concurring with this view were columnist Doug Bandow, economics professor Walter Block, and Justin Raimondo, a media fellow with the Ludwig von Mises Institute. Arguing against the proposition were David Gordon, a senior fellow at the Ludwig von Mises Institute, *Chronicles* editor Thomas Fleming, and Murray Rothbard.

In contrast to many dull (and not inexpensive) academic gatherings in Washington, this event left all guests feeling that they had got more than they had paid for. Even a neoconservative guest admitted that although he had not always agreed with the speakers, the content and delivery of their material were uniformly excellent. Perhaps the high point of the weekend was the "Songfest," consisting of recitals of such classics as Gilbert and Sullivan's "I've Got a Little List," as well as new versions of old chestnuts: "The Ballad of the Blue Berets" and "Over There" (we won't go over!).

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by Samuel Francis

Globo-Cop

No small irony attended the announcement by FBI Director Louis Freeh on July 4 of last year that his bureau was establishing a "legal attache" office in Moscow, and not only because the agency of the U.S. government historically responsible for counterespionage had finally penetrated the capital city of its old adversary. July 4, as antiquarians may remember, is Independence Day, and what was being announced on this particular occasion was yet another quiet step away from the concepts of national independence, autonomy, and sovereignty—not, to be sure, quite as large a step as NAFTA, GATT, or the transfer to the United Nations of command over American troops and the power to order the United States to go to war, which came later in the summer with the invasion of Haiti, but a definite step nonetheless and an important one. Unlike the traditional observation of July 4, however, there were no fireworks, save in the pyrotechnic oratory with which the new chief globo-cop sought to edify his audience.

"We have no time to waste," Judge Freeh puffed. "The enemy has already broken through the gates," and the creation of the Russian branch of the "legal attache" office—known as "LEGATS" in the Global Newspeak that is now replacing real languages—was by no means unprecedented. Unveiled near the conclusion of a 10-day tour of the capitals of Eastern Europe, the LEGATS on the Volga was in fact the 22nd FBI office to be established abroad for the ostensible purpose of keeping tabs on drug smugglers, terrorists, white collar criminals, ethnic cleansers, octogenarian janitors from Dachau, white racialists who refuse to spy for the BATF, indoor smokers, unlicensed religious crackpots, gunowners who buy more than one gun a month, businessmen who clean up swamps on their own property, and other dangerous and unsavory folk whose worldwide wickedness purportedly transcends the capacities of poor little old sovereign megastates to bring them to heel. With his fellow bureaucrat Thomas Constantine of the Drug Enforcement Administration and some 20 other law enforcement potentates from the Justice and Treasury departments, Judge Freeh oozed about the "beginnings of a global strategy against organized crime" and sternly intoned that "organized crime groups are working to supplant governments, and any government that ignores the fact does so at its own peril." All that was missing from the well-orchestrated performance was a picture of the insidious Dr. Fu Manchu to lend concrete detail to Judge Freeh's adumbrations of a vast, sinister, and all but invincible criminal conspiracy against civilization itself.

It has long been recognized that ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union the architects of the "New World Order" have searched for a new enemy. Saddam Hussein was and periodically continues to be useful for mobilizing troops when the incumbent President needs a quick war to see him through an election or to take the proletarians' minds off a celebrity homicide trial grown tiresome, but Hussein and similar Hitleroids are never sufficiently convincing to justify the long-term structural planning the global leviathan needs. Nor, by themselves, are the various drug cartels, terrorist gangs, secret societies of Nazi war criminals plotting to clone each other and take over the planet next Thursday, or any of the other pathetic stock villains with which the masses are manipulated into believing we still have serious enemies and therefore still need a megastate to protect us against them.

But if you lump all these odd characters together, call it "organized crime," and claim that only new heights of governmental power on a global scale can control or contain or otherwise save us from the organized criminals, then you're in business. That, of course, is what Judge Freeh and his platoon of megacrats were up to in their junket to Eastern Europe last summer. The depiction of global organized crime as a "threat" against which the United States and other nations must pool their joint resources is in part driven by the self-interest of aging professional Cold Warriors and an elite of national security managers who in the absence of threats to national security would be forced to sell real estate and insurance. Thus, Roy Godson and William Olson of the National Strategy Information Center (NSIC), a stable of Reaganite Cold Warhorses in the 1970's and 80's, have now turned their energies from crafting apologies for the intelligence services to thinking up plausible rationales for pretending that we really need to fear pimps and drug peddlers in Burma and Thailand. "Global networks" of criminal gangs, they argue, "provide mobility, an effective communications infrastructure and international connections for criminal enterprise," and according to a cover story by Leslie Alan Horvitz in *Insight* magazine last summer, these "networks" deal in illicit goods and services in the same way as multinational corporations. "Godson and Olson estimate that international crime rings outperform most Fortune 500 companies."

Well, no doubt they do, but the existence of transnational crime is hardly new—it was known in the modern world at least as long ago as the Caribbean pirates of the 17th and 18th centuries—and hardly constitutes a valid reason for centralizing law enforcement powers in new transnational structures. Pirates like Blackbeard and his comrades were dealt with summarily by the fleets and citizens of sovereign nations, and it never occurred to anyone in those days to pretend that it was necessary to set up new transnational bureaucracies to perform functions that existing national governments could and did perform. But of course a legitimate concern over transnational crime is not the only, and maybe not even a real, rationale for creating global police. The *Insight* article also quoted liberal Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, not exactly an old Cold Warrior, who held hearings on international crime last year and who sounds like a *National Review* editor of the 1950's contemplating communism. "The overall international organized crime threat to our interests is more serious than we had assumed," Senator Kerry trembles. "Organized crime is the new communism, the new monolithic threat."

But of course organized crime, even at its worst, is in no sense a "monolithic threat." It is a loose conglomerate of

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not-very-bright gangsters looking for a quick buck who are more often at each other's throats than those of law-abiding Americans or even congressmen and senators. Yet it is convenient to present international organized crime as a "monolithic threat" because only if it is such could an equally monolithic global bureaucracy be created to handle it. It is just such a transnational monolith that people like Senator Kerry want to create as part of the governing apparatus of the New World Order.

It makes sense for the embryonic global government to have its own police force, and already the legal foundations of global law enforcement have been established through the U.N. Genocide Convention and the creation of other "international crimes." The United Nations has already set up tribunals for the trial of war crimes in the Balkans and Rwanda. Of course, what the architects of the global police are seeking is neither real justice nor real security, but a precedent, a clear case in which the horrors of the crimes inflame public imagination to the point that extralegal intervention by the "international community" seems justified and can then serve as a model for future regularization of such intervention as a routine. In both the Rwandan and Haitian interventions last year, the Clinton administration came close to establishing a basis for just such action in the future in far less notorious cases.

The globalization of law enforcement, however, is merely an extension of the nationalization of law enforcement that the managerial left has pursued since at least the 1930's in this country. One of the long-standing liberal complaints against J. Edgar Hoover has always been that he "ignored" or "denied the existence" of organized crime in the United States, and probably today most Americans, even conservatives, share this criticism of the man who built the FBI up from a seedy, incompetent, highly politicized, and outright crooked reservoir of Republican veterans of Teapot Dome in the 1920's into the world's foremost law enforcement agency at the time of his death. Hoover may well have been too quick to deny the existence of organized crime, but behind this denial there was a principled opposition to the centralizing trend of the national state. As his biographer Richard Gid Powers writes: "When the FBI killed a Dillinger, it was because local authorities had been unable to deal with the criminal before he finally did something that came under federal jurisdiction, and not because the overall situation was a federal responsibility. The national crime problem, according to Hoover's formulation, was a local one; the FBI could help by giving the local police technical assistance and by furnishing them with a model of professionalism."

It was in fact Hoover's lifelong battle to prevent the total usurpation of law enforcement by the national government, and as early as 1933 he wrote in a memorandum to Franklin Roosevelt's first Attorney General, Homer Cummings, a zealous pusher of nationalization, that "it is perhaps not overlooked, but it is certainly under-emphasized, that the [crime] problem is a State one."

Indeed, the foremost crusaders against organized crime since the 1930's have consistently been on the political left—Estes Kefauver and Robert Kennedy—and their crusade has generally exploited the sensationalism of organized crime to enhance federal police powers. In Hoover's early days, most organized crime, aside from Prohibition Era bootlegging, which fell under the jurisdiction of a separate federal agency, was by its very nature local, in the form of the vice traffic—gambling, prostitution, and narcotics—and extortion. Neither the FBI nor most of the rest of the federal government had any more jurisdiction or business intervening in the cities and states to enforce the laws of those localities than the United States has in intervening in Russia and Rwanda to enforce theirs. The demand for the bureau to "get involved" in the "fight against organized crime" thus reduced to a simple demand that local and state authority be pushed aside as corrupt and inefficient and that the power of the federal megastate replace it with the integrity and competence characteristic of swollen bureaucracy. As it turns out, this was precisely the argument mounted by Judge Freeh himself in Senate testimony last spring, when he remarked, in the breathless tones characteristic of him, that "More must be done, because we cannot allow the same kinds of mistakes to be made today . . . that were made in responding to the threat of gangsterism that swept through the United States in the twenties and thirties." There is, then, a precise parallel between the efforts to nationalize law enforcement in the earlier period, efforts successfully thwarted by Hoover, and the efforts today to globalize the same functions of government.

Thus, neither the "war" against organized crime waged by the federal government since the 1920's nor the incipient "war" against international crime today is really concerned with crime. What they both represent is merely the continuing quest for centralized power—first on the national level against states and localities, second on a global, transnational level against the nation-state itself—by bureaucratic elites that have now acquired the skills and technologies that enable them to disengage from their own nations and cultures and to grasp for autonomous power on a worldwide scale. The incessant refrain of both phases of centralization is the lie that the smaller, local, and national governments of the Old American Republic are not competent to fight the really tough, smart, big, well-heeled, and vicious criminals that plague us today and that only the really tough, smart, big, well-heeled, and vicious megastate can go toe-to-toe with the global Napoleons of Crime that haunt the imaginations of Hollywood screenwriters and the ghostwritten testimony of congressional hearings.

Yet there is virtually no evidence that greater centralization of law enforcement is any more efficient at stopping crime than the United Nations has been in preventing and punishing genocide. After 60 years of increasing federal intrusion into law enforcement, we have cities through which it is not safe to walk in broad daylight, and all the congressional crime bills and federal gun control laws have done and will do nothing to make them safer. Now we are told that even the nation-state itself is as obsolete as local and state autonomy and that only by setting up a supernational power, over which neither local and state nor even American authorities will exercise control, can the new "enemy," the ubiquitous and immortal "monolithic threat," of global crime be expelled from our gates. We have heard it all before, and those of us who remember what Independence Day is supposed to represent will be no more eager to sign up in the global war on crime than in any of the other and no less fraudulent wars the megastate has declared against the enemies it invents for its own purposes. ◇

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Igor Kopelnitsky

Crime and Welfare

The Immoral Equivalent of Star Wars

by Thomas Fleming

Every few months the gentlemen of the press discover a new threat to humanity that requires decisive government action. Not so long ago the United States Senate, alarmed by reports of a comet striking the planet Jupiter, actually took up the question of protecting the earth against a similar calamity. Conservatives smile, but in the Reagan years, the President's Hollywood imagination was inflamed by a vision of world peace secured by lasers and missiles, like so many angelic swords barring the Soviets from our American Eden.

Usually, however, the crises are more down-to-earth. For several years the lamentations of the press have been directed toward the problem of "children having children"—as if this were something new in the world, when the only thing new is the fact that Americans never grow up.

More recently the declared crisis is children *killing* children, but since the children killing children tend to be the children of children, it is perhaps all one problem. Although American intellectuals and their journalist camp-followers have failed to mitigate, much less solve, virtually every social problem of the 20th century, their failure does not prevent them from proposing new remedies that are inevitably worse than the disease. And so we hear the familiar refrain: the outbreak of children killing each other will be solved—as the general crime problem will be solved—only when the underlying social pathology of poverty is eliminated. This means more welfare, better public housing, make-work jobs, midnight basketball games, and an educational system dumbed down so far that a "youth" with a 75 IQ can graduate from high school and teach at MIT.

I stress this last point, because it is apparent from the newspaper accounts that many of the homicidal adolescents are incorrigibly stupid. Last October in Chicago two teenagers in a housing project asked a five-year-old to steal for them, and when he refused, they dropped him out of a 14th-story window, despite the best efforts of the boy's older brother, who immediately informed the police. Apparently no one ever told them that it is a big mistake to kill someone in the presence of the victim's brother. No educational program could teach these kids, not right from wrong, certainly, for they will never know that, but the simple facts of survival, like not to use the car phone in a vehicle you have stolen, which is what the murderers of Michael Jordan's father did. Even North Carolina schools cannot be that bad.

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To remedy millennia of discrimination will obviously require such long-term programs as cannot benefit any children already born. We hear, therefore, from liberals and conservatives alike, that a more direct crackdown on crime must be undertaken. Depending on their point of view—or who is paying them—the experts recommend more police, more prisons and stiffer sentences, "federalization" of crime control, and disarming the suburbs. (No one even dreams of disarming the projects.) When it is pointed out that none of these methods has ever made more than a marginal impact on crime rates over the long term, the experts shrug their shoulders and say in almost so many words: "Couldn't hoit."

Before spending even a moment "thinking about crime," the average American—by which I mean people who are neither criminals nor criminologists—must dispel a fundamental illusion from his mind. In matters of human life, of good and evil, there is no science that specializes in the knowledge of evil and no class of experts that can solve human problems. The worst delusion of the 20th century is that there is some science of society—sociology, psychology, political science, criminology—that can come up with the social equivalent of a cure for the common cold. Count, if you like, the number of homicides committed in Chicago, correlate these numbers with statistics on employment, inflation, mean temperature, expenditure on education, etc., and you still come up with nothing. Oh, there is a superstitious thrill in reciting gibberish that gives us the illusion of power—that is what magic is all about—but none of these statistical mantras brings us any closer to the nature of good or the problem of evil.

To light our way through the dark passageways of the human heart, we have only the lamp of experience to guide us. The only sciences that can help us are not the new-fangled disciplines modeled on the false analogy of the natural sciences (an error that Aristotle warned against), but the very ancient sciences of moral philosophy and theology, and if any man claims an expert status in matters of crime because of his degree in voodoo or sociology, his every word should be disregarded. Bar graphs and bell curves are about as useful as pins in dolls, and their effectiveness depends entirely on the credulity of the victims.

This, by the way, is the great problem of the neoconservatives, who every year seem to have a new theory about American society and a new set of numbers to support their schemes. One cannot rightly blame them for their stupidity; it is unfair to expect sociologists to understand evil. That is a job for a priest or a poet. The characters of the so-called social so-called scientists have been formed on the corrosive superstition of statistical morality, the same superstition that led earlier generations of social engineers to forge the engines of destruction that are grinding the little loyalties of everyday life into abrasive powder.

Of course, they are not alone. We Americans love to think there are scientific remedies for the fact that we are human, that we can immunize ourselves against the moral diseases under which our ancestors labored. The entire welfare state apparatus is like a moral SDI designed to shield us from the consequences of folly and the danger of real life.

In the godless, cultureless, lawless, rootless world that is a gift of "the science of society," we can call on neither priest nor poet in our hour of need. We do, however, as human beings possess some elementary principles of reason, and as Americans we should have seen enough to know that in a very real sense the liberals are right. We cannot begin to address the problem of crime, much less of juvenile homicide, without first doing something about the conditions that make it possible.

First, let us ask the most obvious question. Boys will be boys, so they say, and men men; since the male human animal is prone to violence and laziness, is it not strange that all societies are not as crime-ridden as ours? America, in particular, was not so long ago a very peaceful society, and even if we say that our high rate of violent crime is a function of the proportion of young black males in our society, we have still not said anything to the purpose. Young black males have been living in America since the 17th century, but it is only in recent years that they have been killing each other off.

If you do not like crime, do not pay for it. In simple terms, this would require: demolition of all public housing; the rapid end of all forms of wealth-transfer, including Food Stamps, AFDC, etc.; the disestablishment of public education and the repeal of all mandatory school attendance laws.

Elsewhere in this issue, Professor Steven Goldberg suggests, somewhat disingenuously I hope, that we are dealing with the residue of slavery, but he does not explain why it is that the longer black males are out of slavery, the more violent, the more idle, the more criminal they become. We can speculate all we like on the persistence of tribal folkways across the generations or on genetically controlled behavioral patterns, but we know that the problem of black violent crime is a recent phenomenon. Most ordinary Americans realize that much of the explanation lies with the welfare state, which includes family assistance programs, public housing, Food Stamps, minimum wage laws, the juvenile justice system, and public education, and although the experts are now calling for "welfare reform" and even retrenchment, and some of them are even blaming illegitimacy on AFDC, they refuse to address the moral facts of American welfare.

Consider the typical example of a 15-year-old Chicago gangster, reared by a mother on welfare, sent to schools where even if the teachers tried to teach, he could learn little by reason of his low intelligence and disordered family life. He can never hold a real job, first because he is stupid—nature saw to that—second, because he is lazy and shiftless—his mother and the schools have done their job all too well—and third, because he knows he does not in fact have to work. He can always live either free or at low cost in the sort of project he grew up in. These projects, built by the taxpayers and dominated by criminal gangs, have formed his character and taught him that if he

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cannot get enough of what he wants from welfare, he can always steal or deal. By the time he kills his first victim, the time for reform has long since past, and the only profitable thing that can be done with him is to put him out of his and our misery.

Let us imagine the same youth 100 or even 50 years ago. The chances are he had a father, because there was no government program discouraging fatherhood. Father worked, because the law of the land, for black and for white, was the solemn principle Father Abraham pronounced as the solution to the plight of newly freed slaves: "Root, hog, or die." Father might drink too much occasionally or smoke a little reefer, but if his bad habits got in the way of his work, he was out of a job and would not be able to feed himself, much less a family, and if he was sufficiently lazy, stupid, and dishonest, he might not succeed in passing on his bad character traits to future generations.

The family did not live in a project, because there were none. They had to find their own house or apartment or room, but in paying rent and taking care of themselves, the family made what we call a home. If father or son was inclined toward crime, he had the book thrown at him, a very heavy book, and before the establishment of juvenile justice systems, a teenage boy would have to take his punishment "like a man." Besides, dad, after working a 50- or 60-hour week, was probably too tired to hang out with the boys and get into trouble. Son, who probably started to fail in school by the fifth or sixth grade, was also working a full week, and all those boyish high spirits, which today would incline him to rape and murder, were vented in work. "Idle hands are the devil's workshop," as my high school Latin teacher used to say, and if a child cannot learn Latin, then he had better learn a trade, as an apprentice, or, if he is incapable of learning a skilled trade, then let him begin his career of lifting and fetching as early as is practicable.

Leisure is, as Josef Pieper said in the title of his beautiful book, "the basis of culture," but culture in this sense is not a free or general good. Most Americans, not just the criminal classes, have far too much free time on their hands. American popular entertainment bears witness to the great mistake we have made as a people, in equalizing economic circumstances for the different social classes. Most of us, if we have time on our hands, turn to football or pornography. Work is better. Vergil, pondering this problem in his *Georgics*, concluded that Jupiter himself had willed that man's work be hard. The god had sharpened men's wits with worry and did not tolerate lethargy: "*Labor omnia vincit improbus et duris urgens in rebus egestas*."

Chesterton and his friends used to argue that what we call crime is simply the vices of the lower classes, and to some extent that observation still holds. Obviously rape, murder, and assault are terrible deeds, whoever commits them, but the furor over crack—as opposed to regular cocaine or prescription tranquilizers—is one more sign that America is a class-based country. Our society is plagued by genuinely evil people, and the "community" undoubtedly has a disproportionate share of them. On the other hand, I am not especially impressed by the morality of white middle-class businessmen. They marry, it is true, but so many of them divorce their wives in order to pick up a sex kitten or trophy wife. They do not rob openly, but so much of what is manufactured in this country—automobiles, appliances, food products—is unreliable junk that no honorable man would make, much less sell.

As Eugene O'Neill's Emperor Jones observed, when you steals small, they puts you in jail, but when you steals big, they puts you in the hall of fame, when you croaks. That, you might say, is the American way, the American morality, but the national concern with crime is not directed toward the big stealers; it is limited to the little street criminals who live by the code of Wall Street—only with more direct methods. Once upon a time they would have gone to church and received the rudiments of a moral education. Today, the American upper class has more or less succeeded in destroying or corrupting the "opiate of the masses," and if there is no institution—much less an exemplary upper class—that can give such simple people the gift of a higher ethical sense, at least we can give them the lower and pagan gift that so often must do duty for morality: I mean labor, sweat, exhaustion.

Criminal behavior is a lower-class luxury paid for by taxes collected from the working classes. If we do not like the form this luxury takes, we have the privilege of refusing to subsidize it, but if we persist in electing Presidents and Congresses who continue to expand the scope of the welfare state, we have no right to complain. If you do not like crime, do not pay for it. In simple terms, this would require: demolition of all public housing (forget the buy-back schemes; they are simply another expensive welfare program); the rapid end of all forms of wealth-transfer, including Food Stamps, AFDC, etc.; the disestablishment of public education and the repeal of all mandatory school attendance laws.

Schooling is not a right or even a privilege. It is the duty of parents to rear their children, and if ignorant parents cannot give their offspring a "good education," it is hard to say who loses. What good have advanced degrees done the faculties of Harvard and Yale? Has education taught them to lead better lives, be faithful to their wives, fulfill their duties as teachers, or even to be honest scholars? Fraud and plagiarism constitute the M.O. of American higher education, of the faculty as well as the students. Better illiteracy than a chair in poli sci or literary theory.

But what about the children? A few years ago, I was having breakfast with a prominent and very bright neoliberal, and when I argued for the abolition of welfare, he asked: "What would you do with crack babies?" My answer was a rabbinical question: "What would you do? What can anyone do?" But there are a great many babies being brought up on AFDC payments. What do we do with them? Neoconservatives are fond of workfare, but why is it their business how parents spend their time or rear their children? The whole point is to let people take care of themselves. Workfare implies a rejection of the family and is a studied insult to the poor.

Some children on welfare do have mothers who can work and put the baby to live with grandparents; others may find husbands, once the economic disincentives to marriage are taken away. And for those children whose mothers are drug addicts or prostitutes, let them be given up for adoption or put into an orphanage—if the mother agrees. In no case should such women be "enabled" to rear up another generation of gangsters.

In the frightening case of "Yummie" Sandifer, an 11-year-old murderer whose own gang killed him to avoid trouble (another brilliant move, since the worst that Yummie could testify to could not have attracted so much attention as this killing), the boy's drug-addict mother had given him to the grandmother to rear, but granny, far from being a kindly old lady in

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a shawl reading her Bible, kept a house of ill repute. Even Oliver Twist's workhouse (or Fagin's gang, for that matter) must be preferable to such a life.

"Root, hog, or die." Some of the men, as many white as black, undoubtedly will, but death by gunfire or a drug overdose is hardly preferable to death by starvation. Those who want work will find it, so long as there is no minimum wage, and if they must work 60 or 70 hours a week in order to earn subsistence, so much the better, if the alternative is a life of vice and crime. It is Adam's curse on all his descendants, including Cain.

Some of the neoconservative sociologists and their ghostwriters are coming round to arguing for welfare reform and even for the abolition of certain programs. That is all well and good, but it is too little too late. So long as there are public schools, housing projects, minimum wage laws, affirmative action requirements, and a war on drugs, there is no tinkering that can really help. The only cure for idleness is work, and the only cure for the pathologies of urban poverty is to be found in rural poverty, and it is no accident that many urban black families are sending their children and grandchildren to their relatives in the South. When the great crunch comes, this trickle of emigrants will become a mass exodus. No one who can plant turnips, hoe beans, or poach deer will starve in the rural South.

A hundred years ago Illinois Republicans, looking for cheap domestic labor and a source of votes, imported trainloads of Southern blacks into Chicago. The lives and manners that had been formed on country life were inevitably distorted and corrupted in the city, where the networks of kin and neighborhood were broken down. Their descendants have been addicted to a far more poisonous drug than heroin or cocaine, and that is the moral servitude that comes from a life lived in dependency on strangers. All the social policies since the New Deal have been inspired, in some measure, by the conviction that such problems—including the problem of Southern white poverty, the problem of juvenile delinquency, the problem of unassimilated immigrants—all can and must be solved by preventative programs such as civics education, Head Start, Social Security, or child protection laws. But these programs turn out to be, if not smoke and mirrors, then lasers and missiles.

Life hurts, reality hurts, and if we try to prevent crime or avoid pain, we succeed only in making ourselves less human, less capable of living. The tragedy of the welfare state is that it infects us all. The lowest classes are becoming indolent, vicious, and criminal, while the rest of us have become soft, irresponsible, and luxurious. So long as we refuse to accept responsibility for ourselves and our families—so long as we vote for Social Security and the vast apparatus of middle class welfare—we are morally incapable of dismantling that part of the welfare state that is corrupting the lower classes. Perhaps, as our own lives become so frail and insubstantial, so dependent on the state for support and protection, we are even beginning to envy the life of lower-class gangsters. In that case, instead of "doing something" about crime, we should sit back and enjoy the evening news like the indolent and effete spectators at gladiatorial games. If popular films are any indication, the comfortable classes have developed a taste for blood, and instead of dismantling the welfare state, we should insist upon front row seats that would give us all value for our money. ⟨c⟩

Depth Charge

by Charles Edward Eaton

It may be simply an olive tasted,
A glass of wine lining the tongue with red,
A rose looked at without scabs on the eyes,
A drop of ice-cold water on the glans.
It does not have to be shot from a ship,
A decisive hit on a submarine,
Nor an avalanche falling on the road
Just as you drive around the dangerous curve.

The smallest inoculations will serve:
The furled iris as you bend down to smell
Before the flower gives up everything
And the air is saturated with fragrance—
Or when you pick up the serviceable cane
And find that it speaks back, flipping its sword,
The incised mind making its incisions,
Awakened, the great insinuator.

Thus you will cure and calm deficiency,
Making and receiving innuendos,
Inured to the huge rock mass on the road
And the banging and shuddering overhead—
Not that the head lies easy in the air
Or water, but that we live for insight—
The pencil purls as well as the sword-tip
Once shields of isinglass drop from the sky.

I do insist upon that fresh olive,
The thrilling glass of wine, that unscabbed rose,
The heat around the hatband when you thrust
The cane—the received, wanting intaglio.
It will add up to depth charge, dazzlement,
I assure you, the kind that does not kill—
After the long, keen, indicative stroll,
In the hall, light keeps fencing with the cane.

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All Things Considered

by Charles Edward Eaton

If you aim at a target you may not
Hit the thing in mind but something else:
Consider the color of that dahlia fed on apricot.

You have the flower but you do not have the fruit,
The thing you wanted, the luscious filling in the mouth,
The orange going down into the depths, the chute.

Night comes and fireflies light their fire—
You wanted lanterns strung along the garden
To send you on your latest ego trip as dauphin of desire.

You sit on the porch and think you hear a dulcet fountain giving voice:
The gulping gone—all suave and silvered aftermath.
The sound, it seems, is some late swimmer dripping in the house.

Take the little drama then, giving up the fruit, the trip, the fountain blest—
The wet intruder looks exquisite in the moonlight,
And cool is the comfort in your hand when you caress her breast,

Caress and hold, caress and hold, here in the present tense—
Exeunt omnes all things wanted otherwise:
Life is more adept than you at setting terms and switching evidence.

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Antinomies for Vulcan

by Charles Edward Eaton

Put a bronze nude in a room that is red,
Red walls, red rug, carnations on a table,
So that it says to anyone too white of mind: Drop dead.

Nevertheless, the nude is in control—
If the room could move, it would turn around it like an axle:
Someone put the passion of his life in it, the soul,

As if to say I coach and counteract the blood.
She was white, the model, gloriously milky white:
The favors and flavors of her body were offered up like food.

It was a bold thing: instead of marble, go for bronze—
All of that red and lissom white might have curdled
Without the shimmering resonance of a gong sounded by a bonze.

Not a mood, a style, for every day and every hand—
Sometimes a blue room, a small, gold, glowing statuette:
A needle taken from a haystack when fire moved across the land.

The storm, perhaps, blew out, blew in, those walls glazed by fire:
Cire perdue—the bronze is done, the axle turns—
Drop dead, and live, a voice contends, from the center of desire.

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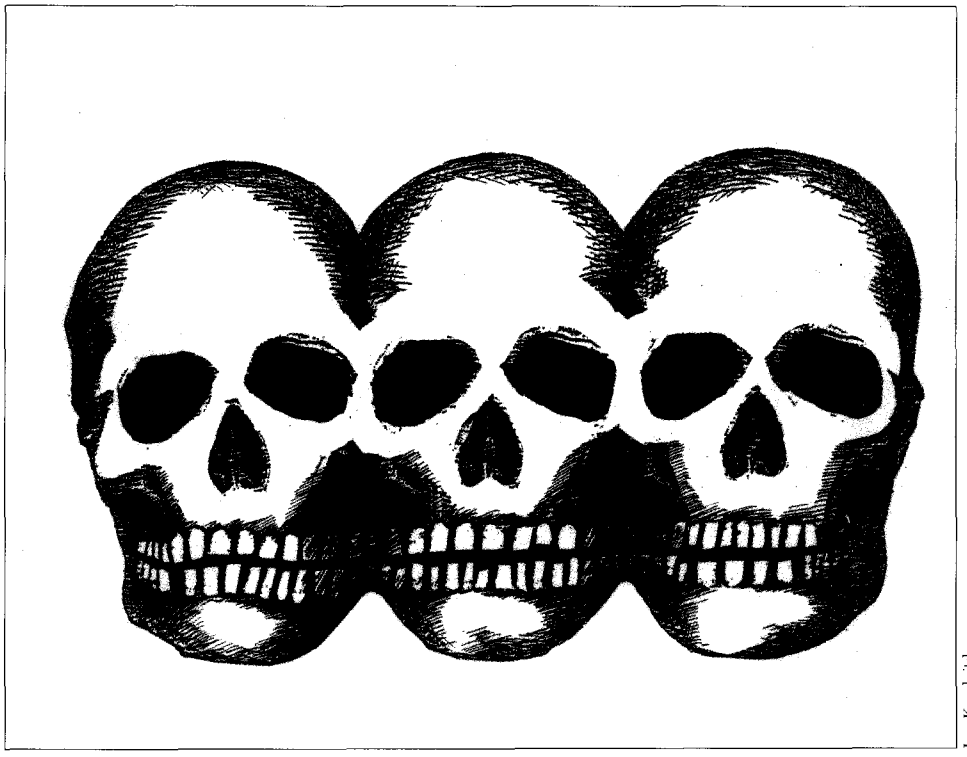
The Inner Darkness

Serial Murder and the Nature of Evil

by Philip Jenkins



Igor Kopelnitsky

Every society has its mythology, its particular set of heroes and monsters. In North America over the last decade, the figure of the demon or monster has come to be represented by the serial killer, an image that is now quite ubiquitous in popular culture. In a typical chain bookstore, a B. Dalton or Waldenbooks, it is easy to find 50 to 60 titles dealing with the serial killer in fact or fiction, and the number of new novels on the theme is approaching two a month. In the "true crime" section, figures like Ted Bundy, Jeffrey Dahmer, and Joel Rifkin are celebrated in countless red-on-black-covered paperbacks with repetitive titles, each suggesting themes of death, blood, hunting, and mutilation.

Popular fascination with serial killers is often denounced as prurient or condemned as sexist wish-fulfillment, but these approaches are simplistic, or at least do not fully reflect the quite complex mythological foundations of the genre: the monstrous, inhuman killers and the heroic mind-hunters who venture into the psychic borderlands where they can encounter and entrap their prey, even at considerable risk to their own souls. The serial murder theme presents, albeit in the contemporary language of social and behavioral science, a mythology of the conflict between good and evil, and the massive appeal of this imagery indicates a widespread need to place current problems in a context that is moralistic and heroic and that accepts the absolute verity of the concepts of virtue and sin: in short, a religious context. Popular culture is therefore succeeding in providing interpretations of objective moral evil of the sort that is lacking elsewhere in public discourse—in politics, in criminal justice, in education, and, perhaps most conspicuously, in the vast majority of churches and synagogues. The power and influence of this imagery go far toward explaining popular attitudes toward crime and justice, attitudes that legislators and social theorists neglect at their peril. And however sensationalized and packaged for tawdry crime books, the serial killer does tell us something about the limits of moral relativism.

Serial murder is an extremely rare offense. At any given time, there are probably between 50 and 80 active serial killers in the United States, "active" in the sense of having killed repeatedly before and intending to kill again, and these killers probably account for about 400 victims each year. The number may sound horrendous, but it is no more than one percent of all homicides, or 0.01 percent of all deaths that occur in any given year. Nor is this, as is sometimes stated, solely a contemporary phenomenon. *Per capita*, there were probably

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almost as many active serial killers in the United States in the first three or four decades of the present century as there are today. However, the number fell sharply in mid-century before rising again from the late 1960's on, and this increase has caused contemporary perceptions of a "murder wave," the modern "epidemic" of serial murder that has proved so profitable for the thriller novelists and true-crime writers. Nor is it self-evident that serial killers are the "worst" criminals in terms of the number of their victims; we might point to various corporate or governmental decisions that have resulted in the spilling of more blood than has been shed by the most savage street predator. Serial killers are important not because of the quantitative scale of the mayhem they cause, but for what they suggest about the causation of other less publicized forms of crime and about the incredible destructive potential of the human animal.

It is unnecessary to expound upon the activities of multiple killers and the rape, torture, and mutilation that they often inflict upon their victims. Perhaps more horrifying than any individual atrocity is the collective nature of many of the crimes, which popular stereotypes often ignore. Many serial murders, perhaps a fifth or more, are committed by groups of offenders. Such cases include the "Trash Bag Killings" of dozens of young men carried out on the California freeways in the 1970's by Patrick Kearney, David Hill, and possibly others, and the "cannibal killings" that occurred in Chicago during the early 1980's, when a group of four young men murdered and mutilated up to 18 women, preserving parts of their bodies in what was said to be a "Satanic chapel." England witnessed one of the most remarkable of such cases, when a pedophile ring based in London undertook the abduction, rape, and murder of several boys during the 1980's, including some as young as five years old. The ring might have included up to seven or eight people.

That one person might be sufficiently deranged to attack strangers can be understood, but far less comprehensible is the decision of three or four (or more) distinct individuals to combine their efforts in such a bloody enterprise. This fact alone goes far toward discrediting the conventional psychological explanations for extreme violent crime, the endless litanies of causal factors based on physical abuse or maternal neglect. Such explanations might apply in one case, but how do several such aberrant individuals chance to find each other? The phenomenon of group serial homicide seems rather to suggest that these are "normal" individuals, free from obvious psychiatric disturbances, who find themselves in a social situation in which they can fulfill urges and desires that would otherwise remain suppressed.

There is no shortage of explanations for the nature of these urges, and social and political activists of all stripes have attempted to use the serial murder theme as a vehicle for their own pet analysis of the wrongs of the world. Recently, feminist militants have portrayed serial murders as a manifestation of "femicide," a form of misogynist terrorism that prevails in sexist and patriarchal societies that permit discrimination and pornographic literature. Of course, such a view depends on the assertion that serial murder is usually motivated by sexual urges, a stereotype whose accuracy is far from certain. The theory is belied by numerous cases in which nurses and other medical personnel of both genders kill patients out of motivations that have far more to do with the assertion of power and control than with any overtly sexual impetus. The feminist view also depends on serial killing being a male prerogative, a dubious notion given that about a fifth of recorded offenders are female. Women also tend to kill by means that are less likely to be detected by doctors or police, so the actual proportion of women serial killers is likely to be even higher than it appears. It has been amusing to observe the intellectual contortions of feminist theorists and media people desperate to prove that seven-time Florida killer Aileen Wuornos is somehow not a blatant example of a female serial murderer.

It is hardly surprising that in seeking to describe such individuals, modern writers have had to resort to a terminology that is so out of fashion as to be almost humorous, so that Nilsen, Bundy, Gacy, and Dahmer become 'monsters,' 'ghouls,' 'demons,' 'wolves in human form.' They are, in short, evil.

Some serial killers undoubtedly act because of perverted sexual desires, and some because of atrocities committed against them in their early years. In virtually no case, however, should we accept at first hearing the explanations they offer for their own motivations, as these are often intended to con or manipulate a researcher. Ted Bundy was superb at presenting accounts of his career that would mesh with the expectations of an interviewer, and his final interview on the evils of pornography was a masterpiece of the genre. But having said this, interviewed killers repeatedly return to the same themes in analyzing their acts, and their statements gain a certain credibility because they can achieve no gain or profit.

What do serial killers have in common? One trait that recurs is an absolute self-absorption, a failure to acknowledge the reality of outside phenomena except as sources of sensory pleasure. Ted Bundy, for example, once remarked that "the past is like a mist—who can touch a mist?" and clearly in his mind his victims never possessed more than a wraithlike quality. Victims thus cease to have reality as human beings and become bizarre toys for the violent fantasies of groups like the London pedophile ring. This sense of godlike power over victims can be manifested in bizarre and even childlike ways, as with the two nurses who murdered several elderly patients chosen so that their surnames would spell the acronym MURDER.

English multiple killer Dennis Nilsen has produced some of the more telling self-analyses, and his articulate views have been recorded by journalist Brian Masters. Nilsen remarked, "I made another world, and real men would enter it and they

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would never really get hurt at all in the vivid unreal laws of the dream . . . the pure primitive man of the dream world killed these men." Masters has noted how often killers see themselves as a battleground between forces of good and evil, with the homicidal behavior being the work of an "inner me," an "inner darkness," a "darkness within." In some instances, this language might be a legal ruse, an attempt to create a plausible insanity defense based on a claim of multiple personality disorder, but the terminology is not exclusive to such efforts. Depending on the religious background and upbringing of the particular offender, this inner darkness might be personified as an objective reality, identified with Satan or some demon figure, or even with a twisted image of God. Some offenders even claim to be acting as servants of Satan or of some imagined Satanic cult.

Knowingly or not, serial killers often speak the language of possession, of living in a dark reality that wholly separates them from the world of ordinary humanity. Almost instinctively, they have perfectly formulated the Jungian concept of the "shadow," the sinister and dangerous product of forces and experiences that have been driven deep into the unconscious. It is hardly surprising that in seeking to describe such individuals, modern writers have had to resort to a terminology that is so out of fashion as to be almost humorous, so that Nilsen, Bundy, Gacy, and Dahmer become "monsters," "ghouls," "demons," "wolves in human form." They are, in short, evil.

A great gulf lies between such an interpretation and virtually all academic writing on the subject by sociologists, criminologists, and psychologists. It is simply not acceptable in scholarly quarters to use the rhetoric of supernatural evil, however tempting such rhetoric might be. One of the seminal discoveries of 19th-century psychology was that some individuals can act in a bizarre or uncontrolled way without demonstrating any conventional signs of insanity. Originally termed *manie sans délire*, or "moral insanity," the condition is today termed "psychopathy," and the language used to describe a psychopath often verges on the religious. Though intelligent, they are "paper men" lacking remorse or affect, having no sense of the harm caused by their actions and failing to recognize the reality of their victims. In more traditional language, they are "monsters" without soul or conscience, but that terminology cannot be safely employed. In Thomas Harris's novel *The Silence of the Lambs*, the killer Hannibal Lecter taunts FBI agent Clarice Starling, rejecting her psychological attempts to find what made him a killer: "Nothing happened to me Officer Starling. *I* happened. You can't reduce me to a set of influences. You've given up good and evil for behaviorism, Officer Starling. You've got everybody in moral dignity pants—nothing is ever anybody's fault. Look at me, Officer Starling. Can you stand to say I'm evil? Am I evil?" In real life, the FBI's leading serial murder expert was Robert Ressler, who applied to the study of these offenders a sophisticated behavioral science analysis that has exercised worldwide influence. His fine autobiography, however, bears the title *Whoever Fights Monsters*.

Neither social nor behavioral science offers a vocabulary adequate to describe actions like those of the London pedophile ring or of individuals like Randy Kraft, the California computer programmer who killed perhaps 50 or 60 boys and young men between about 1975 and 1983. The true-crime books on such cases regularly draw on religious imagery, and the studies of the pedophile ring and the Kraft case are respectively entitled *Lambs to the Slaughter* and *Angel of Darkness*.

Where current science fails is in explaining what exactly the killers are doing wrong. If a man kidnaps a five-year-old boy off the streets for the purpose of gang rape and strangulation, in what sense is his conduct wrong? Obviously words like "dysfunctional" or "antisocial" are so weak as to be meaningless, but by what standards is it wrong or evil, if religious or moral sanctions are not accepted? Conversely, the killer may well believe that he is acting out of his proper interests, the interests of the predator following his natural destiny by destroying a life that few will miss. By what criteria is he wrong?

Two centuries ago, these questions were addressed by a novelist, political philosopher, and pornographer named the Marquis de Sade, who tore through the spurious complexities of contemporary wisdom to arrive at a great and simple truth: without God, or without something very like traditional religion, there really were no obstacles to prevent an individual from doing whatever he or she wished. Nobody, not Paul, Augustine, Calvin, or Hobbes, had a better sense of the harm that could be wrought by the unchecked forces of the human will, and perhaps none of these writers understood quite as well how inadequate were mere social or legal sanctions in preventing the depredations of the human beast. The processes of nature were based on continuous destruction, and any creature that acted according to principles of sensuous egotism was simply following "nature's fundamental commandment." Sade writes in *Justine*, "The wolf who devours the lamb accomplishes what this common mother designs, just as does the malefactor who destroys the object of his revenge or his lubricity."

For Sade, like Ted Bundy or Dennis Nilsen, the victims were insignificant and their deaths illusory: "Man has not been accorded the power to destroy: he has at best the capacity to alter forms, but lacks that required to annihilate them." Pangs of conscience resulting from such acts were simply the socially instilled products of "an easily subjugated spirit," and they were easily purged by repeated indulgence. What could be more obvious than the relativistic lessons of comparative anthropology, that "what is called crime in France ceases to be crime two hundred leagues away . . . that it is all a matter of opinion and of geography." If one obeyed the promptings of nature without restraint, how could it be wrong to spend one's life devising ever more sophisticated and excruciating ways to cause pain and death, provided that this activity enhanced the pleasure of the strong and enlightened? How, in fact, could anything be wrong or evil?

Like Sade in his day, serial murderers pose difficult questions for contemporary secular society. We know, we feel intuitively, that their conduct is so far removed from the moral norm that they are certainly evil, or what most societies would call evil. And yet it would invite mockery to publish an analysis placing the crimes in this context.

Such questions are all the more pressing now, because in the last year or two political and social debate in the United States has so often been concerned with the issue of violence and its causation. This debate has covered numerous cases, including the notorious kidnapping and murder of Polly Klaas in California and the spate of mass murder sprees in public places, from subway cars and law offices to malls and post offices, as well as traumatic overseas incidents like the kidnapping of a British toddler by two older boys. Each incident produces a predictable range of responses and calls for solutions, for stiffer

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sentences and the abolition of parole, for gun control and the involuntary confinement of the mentally disturbed. However, these events also reinforce a lesson from the study of serial killers, that at least a few individuals are not simply dysfunctional or improperly socialized, that their crimes may result from a profound schism with the ordinary run of humanity: perhaps from a form of "inner darkness."

We may not wish to speak of evil and might find it useful to return to a pseudoscientific concept like Jung's "shadow," but it is imperative to recognize the reality and force of the phenomenon, and perhaps even its presence in all of us. In the horrifying news footage of the Los Angeles rioting, and specifically of the attack on Reginald Denny, it became glaringly apparent how very close to the surface of civilized behavior lie the most primitive and animalistic instincts to kill and destroy once the restraints of government and law are removed. And as in the case of serial killers, the Denny attack involved a complete dehumanization of the victim and a reduction of violence to a form of symbolic game or sport. Lest it be thought that these savage qualities have any racial dimension, the Denny example only recapitulated the lessons so often taught by the collective sadism involved in racially motivated lynchings in the early decades of this century.

Very rarely is the language of sin or evil invoked in the context of crime by any "official" source—whether politicians, administrators, academics, or the mass media—and yet the flourishing mythology of serial murder shows the thirst for such interpretations in popular discourse. Elite and popular responses to crime and violence are divided by an intellectual and cultural chasm of perhaps insuperable proportions. Consequently, policies toward crime and justice will continue to be made in a thoroughly unsystematic and unplanned way, with the richest rewards falling to the most crowd-pleasing measures that legislative demagogues can devise.

When the 20th century began, it was obvious to all educated people that this would be a great age of science and enlightenment. As this bleak age slouches towards its conclusion, it is clear that science has failed either to understand or to subdue the beast within humanity and that the highest form of enlightenment might be to admit this fact. At the very least, let us agree on the failure of language to offer an acceptable terminology for the beast, the darkness, for whatever metaphor we choose to employ for that intuitively obvious reality. If not "evil," what? ©

Corcyra Memoranda

"Words changed their ordinary meanings and were construed in new senses. Reckless daring passed for the courage of a loyal partisan, far-sighted hesitation was the excuse of a coward, moderation was the pretext of the unmanly, the power to see all sides of a question was complete inability to act. Impulsive rashness was held the mark of a man, caution in conspiracy was a specious excuse for avoiding action."

—Thucydides

If a Cold War corrupts, its cessation corrupts absolutely. The Cold War imposed at least a fear-induced self-restraint, a salutary modesty that there may be no victors. Its ending, however, has led to boastful arrogance in both protagonists. In Russia, there is Zhirinovsky, and the phenomenon may spawn other mini-demagogues. On this side of the ocean, there are the Janet Renos, the gay brigades, and a Queens community school board that wanted to pass a resolution last year proclaiming that "American culture is clearly and unquestionably superior to all foreign or historical cultures." According to a tale in my homeland, only the village idiot asks for official certification that he is a genius. Lake County in Florida has passed a similar resolution.

True, there are no reports yet of a new amendment to the Constitution proclaiming Richard Rorty's superiority over Plato, but something equivalent has appeared in the pages of the French press. The cathedral of Laon, coeval with the ones of Paris, Chartres, Amiens, Reims, etc., is in need of restoration. Euro-Disney, located near Paris, has offered partial financing—provided one of the stained-glass windows will include Mickey and Minnie among the children rushing to be embraced by Christ. Disneyland insists that the window in question should be done by its own designer. The local media speak of "profanation"; they have obviously not read the Queens and Lake County statement of America's cultural superiority.

—Thomas Molnar

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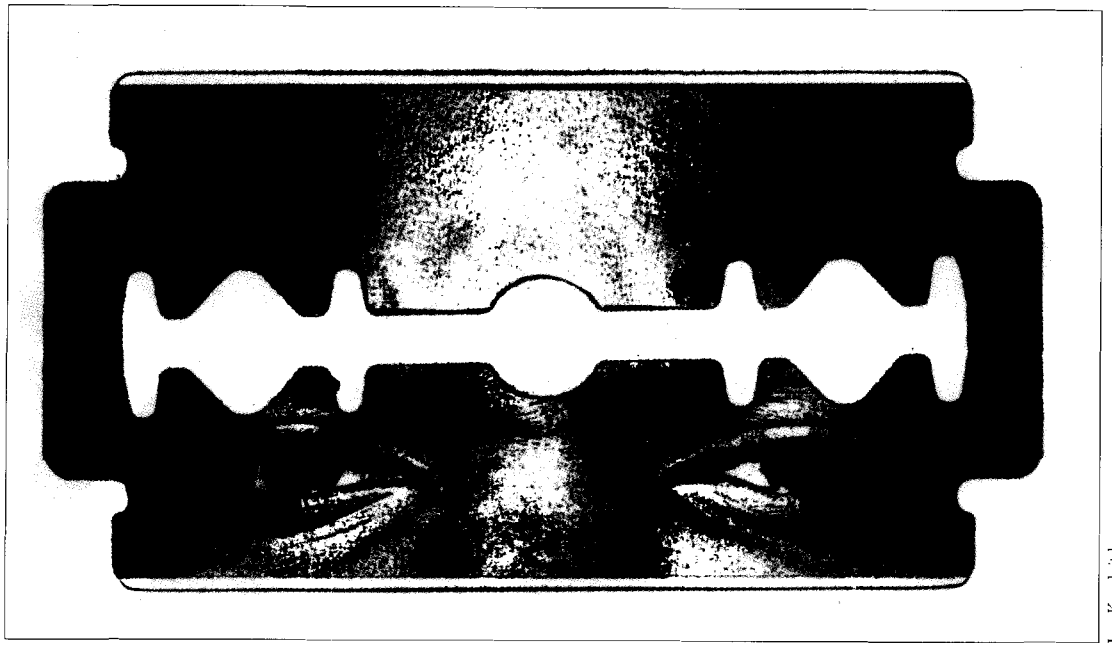
Black Murder

by Steven Goldberg



Igor Kopelnitsky

Imagine the devastating effect, even on the mass of young black men who successfully resist the temptation to violence, of Gwen Guthrie's song *Ain't Nothin' Goin' On But The Rent:*

> Boy, nothing in life is free / That's why I'm asking you what can you do for me / I've got responsibility / So I'm lookin' for a man who's got some money in his hand . . . / I've got lots of love to give, but I will have to avoid you if you're unemployed . . . / You've got to have something, if you want to be with me . . . / Life's too serious, love's too mysterious, a black girl like me needs security . . . / We're only wasting time if your pockets are empty . . . / No romance with no finance.

Perhaps this moves some young men in the direction of employment ("You've got to have a J-O-B if you want to be with me"), but for many—for whom any employment possible in practical terms would clearly be insufficient to satisfy the woman in the song—the song can be only a taunt that makes crime alluring. It is astonishing that more of the deprived and unemployable do not turn to violent crime. I would.

For many it is received wisdom that America's catastrophically high murder rate is explicable in terms of a tradition of violence inherent in American culture. This belief persists despite the fact that such an "American tradition of violence" requires invocation of an obscure and dubious explanation of violent crime where an obvious and cogent explanation suffices. The blunt truth is that a disproportionate rate of murder by a small number of young black men (whatever *its* causes) accounts for the shocking level of violent crime. This may well be what white America deserves for inflicting slavery and the residue of slavery on a people (or it would be were the victims of black murderers not overwhelmingly black). Be that as it may, the reality is that the six percent of the American people who are black males commit half of all murders in America and that most of these murders are committed by the small portion of the six percent who are young.

The causation of the black homicide rate is a complex amalgam. The familiar contributing factors include but are not limited to: family instability (particularly illegitimacy and the absence of a father); educational deprivation in a time when extensive education is a necessary condition for a minimal ability to compete; a milieu in which success becomes associated with crime in the young black mind and in which gratification that is not instant is dismissed as unachievable; the taunting of those who have nothing by television families that seem to have everything; the assault on black males' hopefulness and self-esteem that all of these engender; a system of law enforcement that makes violent crime rational; and, of course, joblessness, prejudice, and drugs. All of these generate an attitude toward educational and occupational pursuits that precludes success.

For many black males these facts greatly increase the likelihood that they will soon be in prison, on parole, or on probation. To be sure, *most* young black males do not encounter a configuration of factors capable of overcoming their resistance (what we used to call "character"), and most of those who do are able to resist the temptation to violence. But for murderers—and that is the subject—such factors are sufficient.

There are other sides to the problem, not the least of which is the black crime caused by black crime: manslaughter by a

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man who would never have committed a crime had he not correctly believed that in his territory one must kill to survive, or murder by those who would not have become murderers had their lives not been formed in homes, neighborhoods, and schools plagued by violent crime.

These destructive forces are in part the result of the historical American attitude toward and treatment of blacks (*how* large a part being an issue of considerable controversy). Thus, there is much to say for the view focused on an "American tradition of violence" if this means a historical American tradition of violence toward *blacks*. After all, we did enslave them and treat them for a hundred years thereafter as people unfit to be in the same schools as our children. This fact does undercut any self-righteous and self-congratulatory dismissals of the view that attributes black social problems to the experience of slavery and its aftermath.

However, to characterize the white treatment of blacks as representing a "tradition of violence" unqualified by color is to make—and is meant to make—an entirely different argument: it implies, indeed *means*, that a "tradition of violence" infuses so much of American culture that it would engender enormously high rates of violent crime *even if America were all-white*. This is, in fact, what most of those who speak of a "tradition of violence" have in mind.

The truth is that crimes in which both perpetrator and victim are white give us little reason to believe that the American tradition of violence is much greater than that of other nations. International homicide statistics are difficult to interpret; different nations' differing methodology and the accurate collection of data are but two of a host of methodological problems. Interpol figures show that America's homicide rate is only slightly higher than those of Canada and the Scandinavian countries (and only an eighth that of Lesotho and a sixth that of the Philippines), while the World Health Organization posits an American rate at least double that of other modern societies. Moreover, as David Ward points out, any comparison of the United States with homogenous societies is rather silly. There are American states with homicide rates lower than that of nearly any European nation and states—especially the most heterogeneous ones—with rates that dwarf any European nation's.

Were it not for the disproportionate black contribution (of victims as well as perpetrators), the United States would have an enviable record according to some data and a poor, but not dramatically so, record according to others. The Interpol statistics, for example, imply that, if the black murder rate were the same as that of whites, the resulting American murder rate would be below that of Luxembourg and only slightly above that of Malta. Even according to the WHO statistics, the rate would not be dramatically out of line even when compared with relatively homogenous industrialized countries.

Whatever the fears of whites, it is blacks who are in fact the victims of black murderers. Ninety percent of white victims are murdered by whites and 95 percent of black victims are murdered by blacks. The near halving of the murder rate that might result from reducing the black murder rate to the same level as that of whites would benefit blacks far more than whites.

To avoid an effect, you need to eradicate one necessary component in the configuration of causal factors. If this were not the case, we would still be dying of a host of diseases that have long since been cured by the discovery and annihilation of a single factor. The common argument that "you cannot do anything about crime until you solve the cause of crime" is correct only in the trivial sense that to "do something about crime" you must do something about at least one of the causal elements. The choice of which element to deal with will depend on how one assesses the moral and economic cost of removing one or the other. But the causal logic is the same whichever element one prefers to attack; the proponent of expenditure for enforcement and the proponent of expenditure for education are both attempting to eliminate a necessary condition for crime and neither can meaningfully accuse the other of not attempting to deal with "the cause of crime."

The rate of violent crime can be lowered—reducing the slaughter that kills blacks and the terror that grips whites—only if it is acknowledged that blacks are responsible for most violent crime. The problem—which is not merely the problem of crime but the problem of the black community's survival and success—can be solved. But it cannot be solved without facing the fact that a small number of irredeemably violent people are destroying the possibility of solution.

Even if the liberal assumption is correct, that poverty, low self-esteem, poor education, and the like are all causes of crime, this does not conflict with the view that emphasizes ineffective law enforcement and lenient sentencing. Conservatives often confuse liberal assumptions about the causes of crime with a willingness to view these causes as somehow disproving the ability of better law enforcement to decrease crime and to see the causes as rendering rigorous enforcement (and harsh punishment) morally unjustified. The second is a moral question, and I would rather wait for the cows to come home than to try to answer a moral question; at least the cows will, sooner or later, come home. The first is a logical and empirical issue, and neither logic nor experience gives us reason to doubt that better law enforcement reduces crime. Even if we ignore the deterrent effect of punishment, a murderer in prison obviously cannot commit another murder outside of prison.

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Crime by a relatively few blacks is destroying the black community. The criminals in this small group are not the breed of times past. While it is now fashionable to ridicule the psychological explanations of crime that gained favor in the 1940's, it may well be that, in times of strong social values, powerful psychological urges are required to overcome resistance to crime. The few blacks who today commit vastly disproportionate numbers of violent crimes suffer not from emotions too powerful to resist, but from a lack of conscience itself (owing in large part to the absence of a father). For such people, fear is the only deterrent.

This means that an increase in the probability of the criminal's being caught and punished will decrease the rate of crime, even if all other causal variables remain unchanged. Indeed, the decrease in crime is likely to decrease the strength of the other causal contributors to crime. (All this can be said of an increase in punishment—as opposed to probability of being caught—but this is much less effective because the criminal who correctly believes that there is little chance of his being caught hardly cares about the severity of the punishment.)

It no longer matters whether the historical treatment of blacks by white America is responsible for violent black crime. Whatever the ultimate cause, crime renders impossible any solution to the black community's otherwise solvable problems. Solutions will remain impossible as long as significant numbers of influential blacks and whites insist that the social forces suppressing blacks also suppress black free will and, therefore, justify leniency. This view confuses the distinction between a possibly justified analysis of legal and moral desserts (i.e., one that sees "free will" as a fiction or as an incomprehensible or meaningless concept) and the role in determining behavior played by a *belief* in free will.

Our legal system assumes that there is free will and that a reduction of free will reduces guilt and, therefore, justifiable punishment. Any legal system that failed to assume this would be likely to careen into self-parody by saying "you can't do this, but since you can't help it, you can do this" (a view permissible only for the legally insane). But even if a legal system took a purely operationalist view—and even if the notion of "free will" were *in fact* an incoherent or meaningless concept—our legal system would have to assume free will because one of the vital causal forces determining behavior—even in a deterministic world—is the individual's *belief* that there is "free will."

We all act in a way that *feels* free. But we do not believe that this has anything to do with how we treat others. *That* must be encouraged by our society telling us that free will makes us responsible. To the extent that a society does not do this, it is much more likely to produce people with a conscience insufficient to keep them from killing.

One of the many, and one of the most effective, ways in which society reinforces responsibility is the threat of punishment. This potential punishment exerts its influence even when the individual does not *consciously* consider the likely results of the potential behavior; it exerts its influence from the time it is internalized by the conscience. In other words: tell someone that for him to commit theft is not really wrong, or if wrong, not his fault, or if his fault, not punishable, and he will be less likely to resist the temptation to steal.

As a rule, the stronger the potential punishment, the greater the internalized resistance to committing the crime. This resistance comes into play long before conscious thought does. (Unlike the small child, we have no conscious battle over whether to steal the shiny object; most of us have long since internalized a resistance to considering such an act.) Thus, if a person feels an impulse to kick you in the shin, the likelihood of his doing so will depend upon the strength of his resistance to doing so. The stronger the punishment, the stronger the resistance he internalizes. This is true even if the impulse is emotional (anger) and when he is not consciously considering the punishment. It is certainly true when the impulse is primarily "rational" and the cogitation conscious (bank robbery). And this is all true even if the determinist is almost entirely correct in his identification of the psychological, familial, economic, and social causes of the behavior, and even if free will (as opposed to a belief in free will) plays no role.

Black Americans have generally remained a friendly people in spite of their oppression. Indeed, this kindness would be unbelievable if we did not know it were true. But where slavery and ostracism failed to unleash black rage, black crime—and the fear and destruction this crime causes in the black community—may succeed.

The rate of violent crime can be lowered—reducing the slaughter that kills blacks and the terror that grips whites—only if it is acknowledged that blacks are responsible for most violent crime. The problem—which is not merely the problem of crime but the problem of the black community's survival and success—can be solved. But it cannot be solved without facing the fact that a small number of irredeemably violent people are destroying the possibility of solution. The black majority alone cannot solve the problems of the black community, and a reduction of black violence is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the solution of its problems; the commitment and resources of the entire society are required. However, the problems cannot be solved at all unless the black majority can socialize the rest of the members of its community to meet the norms that must be met in any community that is to survive, and there is no chance whatever that members of the black majority will be able to do this while being picked off one by one on streets that a relatively small number of predators now control.

The black community will not solve its problems if it in effect excuses black murder on the grounds that "America is a racist society." The conservative abhors this view because it implies that the murderer bears little responsibility for his crime. The black, on the other hand, feels the term to be justified because he knows that the white unfairly reserves for the majority of black males expectations the white would not have of whites. The black is utterly correct; attaching to an individual member of the black group expectations that, even when statistically true of the group, are not true of the individual member is a perfectly reasonable definition of "racist." It is "racist" in its effect on the innocent individual, even though there is no avoiding the tendency to perceive the individual through a statistical lens and no possibility of assessing a person one hardly knows "as an individual."

In any case, we are at the point where it would make no difference even if black violence were *entirely* the fault of white America. Black survival requires that the black majority not be destroyed by a black minority, and it makes no sense for whites to let a sense of guilt—whether justified or not no longer matters—lead them to blame such depradations on an "American tradition of violence" of which there is little evidence. False explanations seldom lead to solutions.

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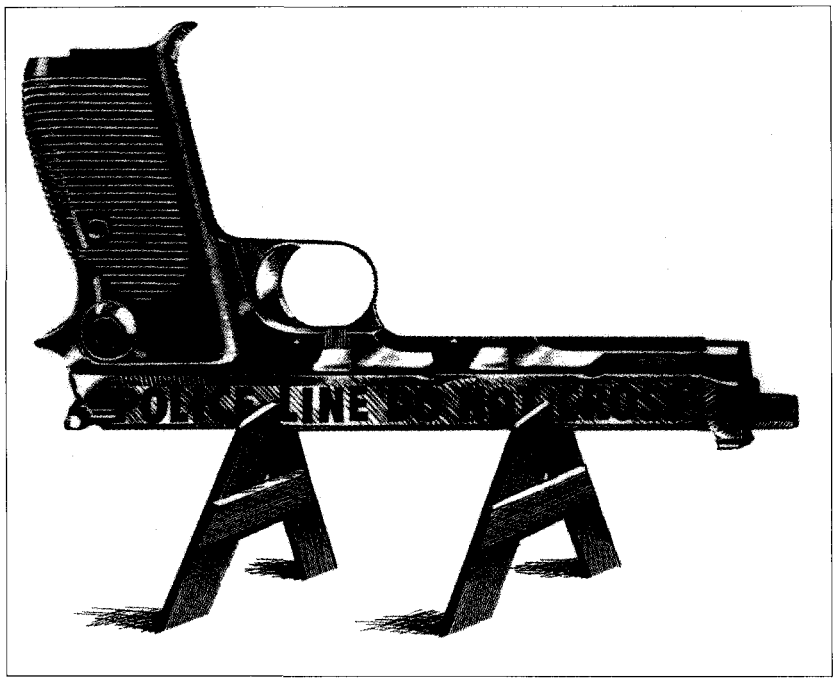
A Solution to Crime

Chronicles interviews Peter Shaw



Igor Kopelnitsky

Frankly, we were skeptical when first contacted by Peter Shaw, Ph.D., a genial, tweedy, professorial type carrying a somewhat foxed and dog-eared manuscript boldly titled "My System." It outlined, he claimed, a comprehensive solution to the leading social problems of our era. Despite appearances, the man was hard to dismiss, especially given his claim that his plan would be embraced with enthusiasm by liberals and conservatives alike.

Throughout the interview Shaw insisted that he was himself a liberal dedicated to preserving compassion, tolerance, and the other liberal virtues. But inasmuch as he sometimes slipped into describing these virtues as the liberal "mindset" and espoused liberal doctrine with an exaggerated unctuousness strikingly at odds with the hardheaded solutions he offered, we remain skeptical about where Shaw's true allegiance lies. The somewhat frustrating interview, during which we might have pressed certain points a bit further, follows below.

Chronicles: What is your background, and what are your qualifications for offering a solution to all social problems?

Shaw: Crime is the biggest social problem. That's what I'm going to talk about first. Figure out how to deal with crime and all the rest follows according to the same formula.

Chronicles: But what is your expertise in this area?

Shaw: The first thing is that everyone has to start thinking about crime in just the opposite way from what they're used to. Mind you, I don't question the received wisdom in this area—or in any other for that matter. *Of course* law-abiding citizens are contemptible—lawbreakers are society's true heroes. I do not in any way challenge this truth as it has been admirably promulgated from our pulpits by educational leaders, thoughtful politicians, enlightened police chiefs, and TV news anchormen. All I propose is that—as a temporary convenience only—we agree to turn everything we understand backwards. This means that we would agree to regard unsocial and illegal behavior in the opposite way from how we know it should be regarded. We would, that is to say, regard such behavior as *bad*.

No, no, don't interrupt! I can tell that you are shocked. Let me say that it is to your credit that you are. But before I am, as it were, shouted down and laughed off the stage, let me just indicate what would follow from adopting the assumption that I am proposing.

The first result would be instructions to the police to enjoin, detain, or even arrest people committing unsocial or illegal acts. It would also be necessary to assure the police that such actions on their part would no longer be condemned by the press, nor

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Peter Shaw's latest book is Recovering American Literature *(Ivan R. Dee, 1994).*

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result in their demotion, even though these outcomes are indubitably right and proper.

I should pause to say here that, much as I regret it, such contradictions appear to be an unfortunate but unavoidable feature of the thinking-reversal exercise I propose. Yet the experiment must be seen through to the end if it is to be properly tested.

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Chronicles: What you are really proposing, then . . .

Shaw (interrupting): To take an example of how the reversal would work, imagine a group of disadvantaged youths running through a New York City subway car understandably tearing down advertisements for merchandise they cannot afford. As they make their way through the car, they request that selected citizens give them money for recreational uses.

Under my reversal plan this behavior, fully justifiable though it is, would be defined as unsocial and illegal (a certain amount of police retraining would be necessary here). As a result of this redefinition, the youths could be halted and detained by a police officer.

Chronicles: All you are really saying is that . . .

Shaw (animatedly and, in our opinion, somewhat self-aggrandizingly): In the months and years that I spent developing my crime plan, there were many weary nights when I admonished myself to stop. But an iron logic compelled me to suggest steps even more violative of the social understandings I hold most dear.

If antisocial and illegal behavior were to be regarded as bad, then it followed that the policeman who observes a citizen making his way down the street while shouting and gesticulating at the people around him should request that the citizen conduct himself in a less threatening manner. And if the citizen, understandably taken aback by the policeman's unorthodox proceeding and properly jealous of a citizen's constitutional rights as presently defined in their enlightened way, should fail to comply . . . the policeman should be allowed to restrain him.

I would even propose that if youths outside a rock concert hall should disagree over the qualities of the artistic performance they have just experienced, and if these youths should be agitated by their convictions to the point of arguing vociferously with and shoving one another, a policeman should be licensed to accost them. And if one of them should reach inside his jacket as if to draw a weapon, law officers present should search his person—even if he resists physically.

Beyond these measures we surely cannot go. Yet logically several others do seem to follow. I hereby state my personal abhorrence of what I am about to say and hope it will be understood strictly as an intellectual exercise—a *jeu d'esprit*, if you will. First, upon committing an illegal act, a citizen—no matter how reduced in circumstances or disturbed mentally—would be subject to arrest. Should the citizen resist, the arresting officer would be allowed to subdue him by force. Second, at the subsequent trial the testimony of the policeman would be treated oppositely to the humane way now in favor. That is, the presumption would be that the officer had acted in a professionally correct manner, rather than in a spasm of irrational violence as was more probably the case. Third, upon the handing down of a guilty verdict in a trial, the prisoner would not only be sentenced, as is sometimes the current practice, but also actually sent to jail and made to serve out the time specified by the judge.

The mass murderer on New York's Long Island Railroad provides an excellent example of how my new plan would work in practice. For in February 1992, nearly two years prior to the Long Island Railroad killings, Colin Ferguson was involved in exactly the kind of action and subsequent trial I am describing. Ferguson shoved and verbally abused a woman on the subway, then ran away from officers to whom she pointed him out a few minutes later. He fought the officers, called them racist pigs, and charged police brutality. Ferguson was found guilty of "harassment," the lowest category of crime, and soon released. This was sensitive and correct. Society's responsibility in this case was to reduce white racism and to strengthen gun control laws. Taking into account that Ferguson was able to buy the gun with which he did the killing after a 15-day waiting period, it follows that citizens fighting for tougher gun laws must now fearlessly press for a 21-day waiting period. Some of the victims on the train, well educated and familiar with liberal values, have themselves called for stricter gun laws.

Under reversal of thinking, though, the Ferguson case would have been handled differently. His physical resistance to police officers back in 1992 would have been treated as a felony. The police would have been commended for their swift action. Ferguson would have been incarcerated for a period of at least two years—that is, until some time after the date on which the killings took place.

To be sure, incarceration instead of a compassionate response to Ferguson's life experiences with racism entails a severe social loss. Even if Ferguson had "cooled down" in the "chiller," to adopt the vulgar terminology of society's punitive thinkers, his creative potential would have been ignored or, still worse, stifled. Such waste of human potential is the undeniable drawback to reverse thinking, and it should not be denied. So discouraging is this drawback, in fact, that I find it difficult to go on. Nevertheless, I will continue to trace out the sequence that began with defining illegality as bad.

Fourth, during incarceration the prisoner would not be eli-

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gible either to receive Pell grant money to pay for creative writing courses or to earn a college degree. Nor would he be permitted leave from prison to accept any humanitarian awards (except those presented directly by the legislature or governor of the state where he is incarcerated). Any prisoner committing murder or rape during a temporary release would automatically forfeit his right to future temporary release. (I realize that this draconian measure constitutes a violation of a fundamental human right, but such are the lengths to which speculative theory sometimes takes us.)

On the same point: that all of the harsh measures I have described are unconscionable is evident on the very face of the matter. One can all too easily imagine the setbacks both for enlightened penology and for those forced into committing acts of violence if potential criminals had to contemplate obduracy of the kinds I have described. Jail would deny them the understanding and help in dealing with their corrosive life experiences that they have a right to expect. Consider the situation of a criminal committing what is perhaps his first, tentative illegal act—striking down a privileged, socially uncaring woman and tearing from her neck a gold chain worn with invidious ostentation. The needy, Jean Valjean-like, so-called perpetrator faces a speedy trial and conviction, followed by sentencing and jail time with virtually no hope of early release. Nowhere in this draconian process is the human potential of the condemned in any way recognized, celebrated, or nurtured.

Chronicles: Exactly which side of the question are you on, Dr. Shaw?

Shaw: That's OK, you can just call me "Professor Shaw." You're probably interested in hearing my next plan for mentally reversing the correct opinion we currently hold about virginity versus sexual license, about education to foster self-esteem versus education to impart information, about . . .

Limitations of space made it impossible for the editors to print the remainder of Professor Shaw's somewhat rambling yet challenging lucubrations.

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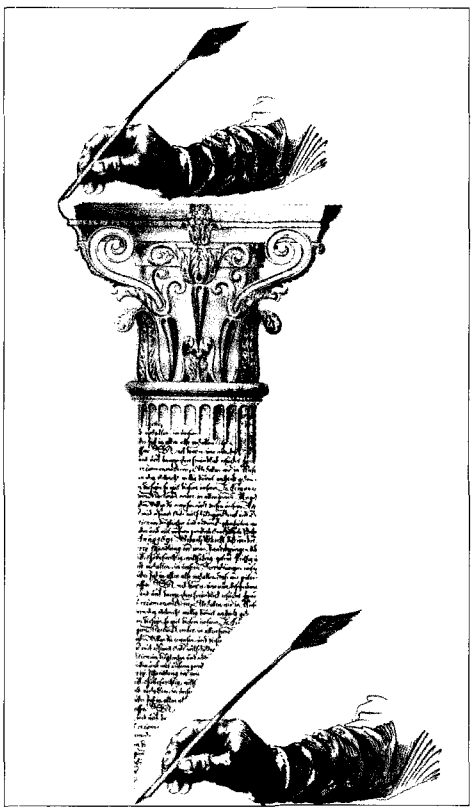
A Poetic Vortex

by James Scruton

"There is no more self-assured man than a bad poet."
—Martial



Igor Kopelnitsky

The Fading Smile: Poets in Boston, from Robert Frost to Robert Lowell to Sylvia Plath, 1955-1960
by Peter Davison
New York: Knopf; 346 pp., $24.00

◆

Sometimes it seems as though everyone who was anyone in postwar American poetry was attending, teaching at, or at least near Harvard in the 1950's. This impression is confirmed by Peter Davison's memoir: everyone *was*. In *The Fading Smile*, Davison offers glimpses into this latter-day stateside Lost Generation of American poets, a casually—we might even say coincidentally—linked group whose work would far outshine and outlast that of their Beat counterparts in San Francisco.

Davison seems uniquely positioned for such reflections. Arriving in Boston in 1955 to serve as assistant to the editor at Harvard University Press, he published his own earliest poems during this time, and later, at the *Atlantic Monthly* and elsewhere, had the opportunity to publish some of the best known poets of our era, including Sylvia Plath, with whom he had a brief romance in the summer of 1955. Davison was part of this crowd, though not at its center; he was on fairly close personal terms with nearly all of its members, yet—fortunately for this book—he could maintain a somewhat objective distance from them. His recollections of that half-decade and his interviews and correspondence since then with most of the key figures make for a thoughtful, revealing, yet in many ways oddly vexing study.

One strength of the book lies in its focus on this mere five-year span—in Davison's view *the* critical turning point in modern American poetry. Not only were many poets on hand in Boston, but they seemed to be part of a generational shift. "Nearly all of us had had in life to struggle with our fathers," Davison writes of his fellows, "and now our fathers-in-poetry were themselves dying." Like the bright, rebellious sons (and daughters) they were, the younger writers consciously veered away from the forms, themes, and tones of their elders in verse.

Or was it conscious? Davison works it both ways. He disparages the prevailing "confessional" mode among these poets as "the need to prop poetry upon their bleeding flesh, . . . to insist upon their

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personal, beleaguered, despairing centrality." At other times, he denies the enterprise was "a deliberate aesthetic move," produced instead by "the nature of the era." This may well be, of course. In his opening chapter on "The State of the Art in Boston, 1955," and in his second, more introspective chapter called simply "The Narrator, 1955-93," Davison compellingly evokes the Cold War tensions, tenuous material prosperity, and nascent urban decay that no doubt provided the psychic background upon which a restless, affluent generation could sketch its own frustrations. (His descriptions of Boston's decline are especially apposite.) Though less than fair to certain poets, as we shall see, Davison's encompassing image of a "fading smile" suggests for us a recognizable countenance of the time.

After these two overview chapters, the book is arranged into essays on individual poets—not, as the subtitle suggests, Frost through Plath but Richard Wilbur through Robert Lowell. These two represent for Davison the poles between which the other poets of the era steered. In several places Davison captures some particular nuance or gesture of a poet, not just describing accurately but indeed rendering the scene in something of his subject's manner. We see and hear Frost in the way he "loved walking home [after a poetry reading] through the dark streets, talking his way down from the preceding high, talking his way back to earth again." Davison's discussions of Plath and Anne Sexton are wiser and more telling than the morose, even maudlin biographies that continue to appear, and the chapter on the late L.E. Sissman—perhaps the best section of the book—may bring some long-overdue critical attention to this neglected poet.

Unfortunately, Davison delivers these satisfactions along with so many irritations, infelicities of language, and dubious critical pronouncements that a reader may end up dismissing the entire memoir. Just a few pages in, Davison refers to the "English Louis MacNeice," a particularly egregious error to readers of modern Irish poetry. We read that W.S. Merwin "acclimatized" (ugh!) himself to Boston, and that when he and Davison met he "spoke precisely but with confidence on a variety of subjects." (Why precisely *but* confidently?) And there is this dud: "Despite their wit and ingenuity, Sissman's early poems gasped at the deeper emotions, which other Harvard/Radcliffe poets of the time also found difficult to handle, and which the tutelage of the time, as so many poets young in the 1940's, e.g., Maxine Kumin, Adrienne Rich, and I, would later note, tended to disparage."

Since these poets' activities overlapped so much, by the time we are halfway through the book we feel as if we have attended the same workshop, poetry reading, or Poets' Theatre production a dozen times. Davison has so heavily documented the chronicle that in places it hardly resembles a memoir at all. On the other hand, it remains too subjective to be deemed scholarship. Perhaps the largest single flaw in *The Fading Smile* is Davison's assumption that the "turn" in American poetry that occurred during these years was necessarily a welcome one. When he says that "American poetry in the mid-1950's had taken a sharp turn toward the European and was due for a correction," we get the sense that he is applauding rather than assessing the movement's eventual impact on contemporary American verse. Thus, early in the book and apparently without irony, Davison remarks that the younger poets "might not have a great deal to learn from Frost's poems themselves"; meanwhile, we cast a glance at Lowell's or Plath's literary descendants and sigh "More's the pity."

No poet Davison covers fares worse in this respect than Richard Wilbur, whose verbal brilliance and personal equanimity Davison finds difficult to reconcile with an era that became as identifiable for poets' breakdowns, abortions, and suicides as for their poetic accomplishments. Indeed, Davison presents Wilbur as little more than a straw man for those who would argue in favor of raw confessionalism in poetry. Davison's tone ranges from the softly patronizing to the blatantly envious. Even when characterizing the Confessional school in essentially negative terms, he seems to chide Wilbur for having an alternative poetic stance: "Wilbur shunned the high-profile self-expression to convey... the inner states of other persons, other actors, and to avoid both the private and the aesthetic dangers of self-revelation."

Of course, Davison never explains why poems featuring "other persons, other actors" cannot be expressive of the poet. (If not of the poet, then of *whom*?) Moreover, this "avoiding danger" complaint merely borrows from the famous put-down of Wilbur's early work by Randall Jarrell, whose comparison of Wilbur to a football running back who "settles for six or eight yards" indicates only that Jarrell understood sports even less than he did Wilbur.

Over and over we hear Davison's resentment: Wilbur has been "extremely fortunate with fellowships"; his awards and honors have been "lucky for his poetry" because they have occasionally relieved him from what Davison deems an already "enviable teaching schedule." Even worse, Wilbur has always "lived at a sanitary distance" from his academic work. (Compare this to Merwin's "wary distance" from classrooms or Philip Booth's "cautious distance" from Wellesley.) Wilbur's great sin in the 1950's, it seems, was his independence from the kind of workshoppery and poetic commiseration that marked literary Boston. Wilbur's work did "not take a sharp turn, as Lowell's and other poets' did"; he had the temerity to keep "at arm's length from the younger poets," to "protect" or "insulate himself from the poetry world." Wilbur says he found the Poets' Theatre—so hallowed in Davison's memory—"amusing but not engrossing"; long before that, at Amherst, he opted not to take the college's only creative writing course. "I never thought I was missing anything," Wilbur admits. And he probably was not.

If Wilbur is guilty of not needing his Boston compatriots (Davison included) to confirm his talent or revise his drafts, then Davison himself may have—albeit unwittingly—hit on the flaw at the core of our current poetry, so much of which derives from the university writing programs that are the legacy of the poetic era Davison memorializes here. The problem, of course, is that such a community cannot be manufactured or programmed—much less staffed and tenured. Late 1950's Boston was a vortex of American poetry, as Davison ably demonstrates, one that was important, exciting, and frenetic, but also accidental and brief. As Adrienne Rich says of Harvard's John L. Sweeney toward the end of this book, "He knew in some way that good poets come from everywhere." Davison knows this, too, just as he should know how often the greatest talents will keep "at arm's length" (and further) from what he admits is the "acidic turmoil of literary life." ◁

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Listen My Children

by J.O.Tate

Paul Revere's Ride
by David Hackett Fischer
New York: Oxford University Press;
445 pp., $27.50

◆

Sometimes you wonder. Having been told by a Democrat that if we had "screwed up" at Saratoga we would today have national health insurance, I suppressed a number of reactions that came to mind by deciding to start smoking again. One was to suggest that if anyone needed health insurance, it could easily be obtained. Another was to ask just who constitutes "we." Yet another was to suggest that if my friend had studied the history of the Revolutionary War, he would know that it was won in the South. And still another was to speculate that if his mother had known who his father was, it would still be a long way to Tipperary.

But of course we all engage in historical speculations, consider "might-have-beens," and somehow acknowledge the contingency of history in the way we try to connect with it. We would do better if we knew what we were talking about, which brings us to the subject at hand. Apparently, everyone has heard of the midnight ride of Paul Revere, but no one knows much about it—not until Professor Fischer got on his horse.

His remarkable book is especially welcome just now, and I think the author knows it. He is certainly not unaware of trends involving the reinterpretation of history, particularly American history. He seems to have voted with his computer and his professional allegiance against Walt Disney, Ken Burns, multiculturalism, and the studied neglect of our history by the educational establishment, and by the public as well.

What we have here is a treatment of legend and history by a professional historian who also is a talented writer. His topic is not grand, but it inspires many insights into history and into the byways of historiography, bibliography, and national mythology. Above all, he tells a story with intensity and drama, wrapping it in the mantle of historical perspective. The result is highly readable, even fascinating.

I suppose that Professor Fischer is a particularist in his insistence on detail and context and *petite histoire*. The following example is one that, though violent, is somehow very pleasing. I like to think of Samuel Whittemore, who, though crippled and 76 years old, picked up a musket and two pistols and a saber when the Redcoats marched through Menotomy. By himself, he opened fire on the column, killing one soldier and wounding two others. One Regular then blew away part of Whittemore's face while others bayoneted him—he was wounded 14 times. Samuel Whittemore lived for 18 more years, without national health insurance. I think we all owe a debt to Fischer for relating that story, and many others.

Fischer places Paul Revere in the context of a distinct culture, and depicts the beginning of the American nation as in effect a colonial and regional English Civil War. His emphasis throughout on a forgotten sense of individual responsibility as well as a sense of collectivity, as distinguished from our contemporary atomism and obsession with individual rights, is a valid lesson, though not without its darker implications.

His evenhandedness produces striking results. He tells the story of the Redcoats with sympathy and understanding, and, unlike some historians, he is able to discuss armies and military culture without discomfort or false notes. The drama he presents is, I think, an ambiguous one, for there can be no doubt that the patriots were dishonest both before and after the violence began. But he shows them as a community who insisted on defending their perceived interest, and who challenged legally constituted authority to do so.

Paul Revere rode and sent signals to warn the people and his network of spies and fellows that the Redcoats were coming—but we have forgotten what they were coming for. They intended to confiscate gunpowder and ammunition and even cannons which the people had gathered. Fischer does not extrapolate, but I think it was rather a bad sign when the farmers started collecting cannons in Kansas in 1858 and later on when the Boers did the same. John Brown seized an armory, and the Civil War broke out essentially over control of weapons, forts, and soldiers. Viewed in that light, the fashionable sneering at the National Rifle Association and the decision that eccentrics who have weapons can be slaughtered with impunity are literally un-American, if anything can be.

I frankly doubt that Professor Fischer means to imply that Americans should rise up to defend violently their right to amass weapons, though that is precisely the collective interest that the Minutemen fought for. He seems rather to be committed to a celebration of the early people of Massachusetts, about whom, we can all agree, there is much to be admired. But this celebration appears to lose its point when Massachusetts is isolated from its neighbors and from the erosion of history. Fischer, in other words, sees continuities where I see radical discontinuities. "Their many enemies who lived by a warrior ethic always underestimated them, as a long parade of Indian braves, French aristocrats, British Regulars, Southern planters, German fascists, Japanese militarists, Marxist ideologues, and Arab adventurers have invariably discovered to their heavy cost." The juxtaposition of Southern planters with German fascists says more about the contemporary mindset of Massachusetts (the one that sustains noble leaders such as the Hero of Chappaquiddick, not to mention Gerry Studds and Barney Frank) than it does about the culture that produced John Adams and Daniel Webster. Fischer confuses Massachusetts with New England and New England with America, a common mistake. Why was the South supposed to accept from New England what New England would not accept from the King of England? He does not seem to understand that New England lost the Civil War as surely, though not as obviously, as the South did, nor does he seem to have heard of Vietnam. He seems to equate civil war with public relations stunts such as the little expedition to Kuwait, which was mounted by a technologically obsessed mass society ethnically and materially unrelated to the Massachusetts of 1775.

Even so, Fischer's attempts to force his vision beyond the scope of his topic do not render his book invalid. On the contrary: *Paul Revere's Ride* is a work of na-

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tional importance, and we are better off for having it. We would be even better off if our children absorbed some of its truth by reading it in school, as teachers and pupils used to do in the old days.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

Disappearing America

by Wesley Allen Riddle

America's British Culture
by Russell Kirk
New Jersey: Transaction;
122 pp., $24.95

◆

America's British Culture by the late Russell Kirk offers a clear, insightful explication of key British elements in American culture, as well as an important critique of the current cultural climate in America. Kirk examines four major British contributions that have particularly shaped American culture: language and a common body of literature; rule of law and the common law tradition; representative government; and ethical heritage—moral habits, conventions, customs, and the like. In an appendix he addresses the aspects of classical philosophy which, mostly transmitted through Great Britain, also continue to affect American mores and political modes of thinking.

Kirk stresses the importance of the King James translation of the Bible after 1611 in America and other works that exerted formulative influence on the Colonies. He shows that much more than abandonment of words and books is involved in the modern refusal to study the classics in favor of more "functional," scientific, or politically correct fare. Indeed, since the body of English literature from Chaucer to Melville contains an operative set of cultural values largely independent of religion, discarding great literature involves the loss of the heroic values that animate it. To the extent that both religion and secular heroic values decline, American culture and civilization decline with them.

In terms of legal tradition, the considered decisions of able judges in a multitude of cases comprise the common law. In the absence of specific statutes, the law respects precedent and generally observes custom. The jury system comes from the common law tradition; so does the presumption of innocence. Kirk points out that this is most unlike civil or Roman law, which constitutes the legal tradition of most of Europe. Moreover, modern interpretations of the law as "living," or as a tool for liberal social engineers and psychoanalysts, undermines the ancient rights of freeborn Englishmen, not to mention the Constitutional rights of American freemen.

American forms of representative government—Congress, state legislatures, county and municipal councils and school boards—also have roots in England. Kirk traces the development of representative government through the various stages in English history. He maintains that the American Revolution was fought over conflicting interpretations of the British Constitution, especially over the limits of Parliamentary sovereignty. The colonists had come to expect *actual* representation from their assemblies in matters involving "internal" taxation. Of course, the sad state of affairs is that the forms have been corrupted. Our country resembles a consolidated national democracy more than a republic. The momentary mob rules, led by special interests that play the country through Congress like some political pinball machine. Average taxes of 40 percent are taken through payroll deduction, and Americans find themselves held hostage by their own government—in the same state of political slavery that drove them from England in the first place.

In terms of an ethical heritage, every culture has drawn its mores or principles of morality primarily from religious belief, and America is no exception. Kirk spends some time delineating the various religious denominations in the Colonies. He quotes Tocqueville, however, saying the various sects comprised a broad Christian consensus concerning morality. Kirk puts it succinctly: "Out of Christian teaching arose America's mores." In addition, Kirk addresses the beginnings of higher education in America and shows how American universities were patterned on Cambridge and Oxford. Such universities satisfied both Enlightenment and Great Awakening impulses in Colonial America and the Early Republic. Oxford's "God is my light" motto applied in substance to the American Ivy League as well. Anyone who doubts it can read the arches lining Harvard yard. They still stand, even as the inner temple is defamed.

Taken together, Kirk's assessments of the four major cultural traditions received from Great Britain present a powerful, sometimes subtle argument about America. Kirk maintains that general culture is necessary to peace and stability in society at large. He demonstrates that civilizations are indeed *predicated* upon the interdependent relationship of high culture and coherent democratic culture of the people. He discusses at length the ongoing transmutation of American culture by counterculture and by relentless attacks on the key elements he described. His focus is on the process of the transmission of culture and the ways in which it is subverted in America by unhistorical and antihistorical education. The outcome, of course, is the disruption of the perennial cultural renewal, a loss of general culture, and the decline of American civilization.

Kirk proves that attempts to infuse "multiculturalism" into the schools at all levels result in a generational missing link. Hans Sennholz has likewise equated so-called "multiculturalism" with *anti*culturalism. It is in fact an attack on the Judeo-Christian culture of the West. Moreover, it constitutes the abandonment of our historic commitment to an American identity. Attempts to exorcise "dead white males" from history and literature and to equate all cultures impede progress and lead to intellectual provincialism. Declining academic standards attest that awareness of diversity in the world and in our own country has actually decreased.

Today, pupils are reduced to the eternal present, without perspective or context, intellectually confined to ever-diminishing boundaries of minority self-esteem. A "Curriculum of Inclusion" has become a curriculum of cultural disintegration. *America's British Culture* is a timely reminder of what is at stake: that complex web of literature, law, government, and mores that constitutes the greatest cultural legacy in the history of mankind.

Wesley Allen Riddle is an instructor in colonial and revolutionary American history at West Point.

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A Lot of Nerve

by Jane Greer

No More Bottom
by Richard Moore
Alexandria, Virginia: Orchises Press;
75 pp., $10.00

The Investigator
by Richard Moore
Brownsville, Oregon: Story Line Press;
220 pp., $18.95

The Rule That Liberates: New and Published Essays
by Richard Moore
Vermillion, South Dakota:
The University of South Dakota Press;
124 pp., $10.95

It was an editor's dream: poems of this caliber, unsolicited and unexpected, in my post office box. The verse was assertive, muscular, practiced but never unsurprising. Who was this man?

Everyone else knew, it seemed. Richard Moore's poems and essays had been widely published for more than 15 years before the publication of his first book in 1971. He has appeared in most of the major periodicals that accept essays and poetry, and he still loves small journals. Eberhart, Nemerov, Wilbur, Kennedy—these are the poets who willingly write "blurbs" for the backs of his books. Richard Moore is the real item.

Moore's most recent publication, *The Rule That Liberates: New and Published Essays* (1994), should be used as a text in any serious poetics class. Three years ago, Moore published a paperback book of rollicking short poems, *No More Bottom*, and his first novel, *The Investigator*. Moore is brainy, but *No More Bottom* is witty, bawdy, brief, and ironic. Some of the offerings seem to have no purpose but to vent his spleen delightfully; others, such as "In Winter," are much deeper than they are long, and fairly representative of Moore's most thoughtful, sustained work:

> A wife and children gone, one
> grieves
> and watches storm-tortured trees,
> hale,
> flexible, whipping in the gale.
> They manage. They have shed
> their leaves.

The Investigator, Moore's first published novel, is an "investigation" of the odd Bromley family—adult siblings Clara, Edward, and Archibald. Now, many of us poets secretly feel that we have a novel in us, and not all of that feeling is due to wistfulness at the notoriety and wealth of successful novelists. However, what poets care most about, generally speaking—sound, immediate effect, metaphor—and what novelists care about—telling a story that gets from "here" to "there," developing characters—are so different as to prevent most writers from doing great things in both genres. Perhaps Moore will be the exception to the rule—but not yet. At any rate, this is a competent first novel.

The next best thing to reading Moore's poetry is reading him *talking about* poetry. *The Rule That Liberates* is comprised of nine essays published between 1982 and the present. ("Poetry and Madness" appeared in *Chronicles* in October 1991.) In his preface, Richard Wilbur writes:

> Though he can spend a fine essay hovering between the formal merits of Frost and Williams, and being fair to both, Richard Moore finally comes down on the side of meter and rhyme, and would have most poets arm themselves with those things if they want to be precise and strong and "transcend their ordinary perceptions." Moore is also one of the small elite of writers who can discuss such weapons—meters, rhymes, stanzas, traditional forms—with authority and without putting one to sleep. As a critic, however, Moore seems quite unarmed, save by his intelligence and learning, his experience as a writer, his unfeigned enjoyment of letters, and his straightforwardness.

The sixth essay—"Of Form, Closed and Open: With Glances at Frost and Williams"—informs the rest (which all concern poetry) and is not a bad guide for life on earth, either. Moore describes the depth and breadth of a Frost poem, its many accomplishments cradled in a mere 14 lines, and asks:

> So how did it come about that he managed to [accomplish all this] in this poem? The answer to that question, I think, is (or can be) surprisingly simple: the poem is a sonnet. Its primary commitment is not to any previously discovered truth or to any intentional saying, but to form, to its manner of saying—whatever it is saying. As Frost himself remarked, he never even asked what a poem he was working on was going to mean; all he ever asked was, "How's it going?" This—and only this—commitment: the commitment to traditional form ("Is it going to be a good sonnet?")—can drop the barriers, the fears, the embarrassments, and make a deeper truth possible.

Moore praises William Carlos Williams' vast contribution to English-language poetry. Poetry so "without pretense, natural, unaffected, unartificial" is difficult for some traditionalists and formalists to love, but Moore says we should try. In his way, Williams was as "pure" in his "metrical devotions" as Frost—or Milton, for that matter.

> I remember hearing Allen Tate in the late 50's, fuming about his former student Robert Lowell: "You just *cain't* like all the people at the same time that Cal says he likes. You just *cain't* like Robert Frost and William Carlos Williams at the same time." It seems to me that this is exactly what we have to learn to do, if we are going to put ourselves together.

We are most free when we accept tradition, most capable of greatness when we try to meet accepted standards: of what it is to be a great mother or father, Christian, stockbroker, senator, or poet. (And a sonnet is most free when the poet tries to make a *good* sonnet-as-sonnet.) Once we accept the framework, we can attempt to enlarge the boundaries. But not until then. And *then*, not only will we be free to be unique, it will be our duty, under "the rule that liberates." Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Thomas Aquinas. Andrew Wyeth and Giotto. Gerard Manley Hopkins and e.e. cummings. Opposites, and *tradition* set them free.

Much is compressed into this short book. In "Milton, Satan, and Now," Moore discusses the modern ambition

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"brilliant"

Arthur R. Jensen,
University of California, Berkeley

"[a] storehouse of well-integrated information"
Hans J. Eysenck, University of London

"major synthesis of social science and evolutionary theory"
Richard Lynn, University of Ulster

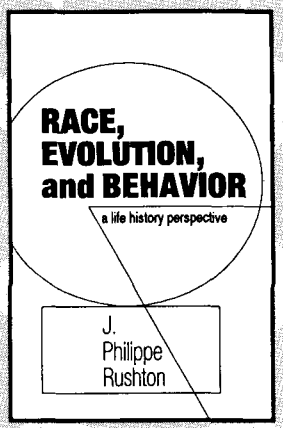
"bold hypothesis"
Thomas J. Bouchard,
University of Minnesota

"brilliant synthesis"
Barry R. Gross, City University of New York

"has the simplicity and explanatory power that indicate truth"
Michael Levin, City University of New York

"organizes well-established group differences into a meaningful pattern"
Robert A. Gordon,
The Johns Hopkins University

"explain[s] the distribution of poverty among nations"
Edward M. Miller,
University of New Orleans



Race, Evolution, and Behavior

J. Philippe Rushton

Why are the races different? How different are they? This book examines genetic theories to overturn the prevailing view that if all people were treated the same, most race differences would disappear. Rushton examines international data on over 60 variables, including brain size, intelligence, crime, and sexual behavior, and finds that Asians and Africans average at opposite ends of a continuum with Europeans intermediate.

ISBN: 1-56000-146-1(cloth); $34.95;
63 illustrations; 344pp.

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"to stand apart from the natural world and to dominate it." In "Poetic Meter in English: Roots and Possibilities," we find in 17 pages one of the most enlightened, succinct analyses of American metrics to date. Other essays tackle Yeats' supernatural "System" (it does not really matter as we read his poems), fanaticism, and "Words and Healing: What's In It for the Poet?"

The Rule That Liberates imparts a healthy respect for and curiosity about how great poems are composed, and a clearer understanding that poetry should be fun. Moore cites Frost's "no surprise for the poet, no surprise for the reader," and reminds us of the healthy underlying frivolity of much really good poetry. For example, in "Classicism in Poetry," he describes the "stultifying" phenomenon of "the quest for the perfect poem."

> Let us call it, remembering an incident in the Second World War, the poem which is 100 percent efficient. Field Marshall Montgomery, who was fond of taking pot shots at his Prime Minister's self-indulgent habits, once boasted, "I don't smoke and I don't drink, and I'm 100% efficient." When the remark reached Churchill, he replied, "I drink a lot and I smoke big cigars and I'm 200% efficient."

So is this book.

Jane Greer edits and publishes Plains Poetry Journal *in Bismarck, North Dakota.*

Dreams of Gold

by Gregory McNamee

Big Dreams: Into the Heart of California
by Bill Barich
New York: Pantheon; 546 pp., $24.00

◆

If California were to secede from the United States and establish itself, as its first Anglo settlers once intended, as an independent republic, it would instantly emerge as one of the world's richest nations. As it is, one in every ten Americans now resides in the so-called Golden State. Its economy affects not only those of neighboring states but those of whole nations—Mexico, Canada, Singapore, even Japan. It is somehow different in just about every way from the rest of the country. To live in California is, as Aldous Huxley observed, to be forever part of a separate reality.

Bill Barich, a journalist, undertakes to provide a portrait of his state in his fine and aptly titled book *Big Dreams*. His method is to travel from Point A to Point B and to narrate all that he sees, a common enough literary device that is nevertheless challenged by California's vastness. Realizing the complexity of his mission, Barich offers us a beeline ramble through the state, beginning in the high desert east of Mount Shasta and wandering leisurely through the Klamath River Valley, Crescent City and Hoopa, the Tuscan landscapes of the Anderson Valley and the Monterey Peninsula, down to Death Valley and the dusty shores of the Salton Sea. The author's appreciation of the subtleties that separate one place from the next yield a lucid, entertaining travelogue.

With his command of California history, Barich sees continuities that other writers have sometimes overlooked. Orange County country-clubbers may curl their lips in revulsion at the mention of libertine San Francisco—a cultural antipathy from which Ronald Reagan made much political hay—since San Francisco has long been "willing to take in every misfit Californian, as well as misfits from elsewhere—the wounded, the defrocked, the intellectually adventurous, and the sexually prurient—and it bound them together into a community that managed to work. That was its genius and its salvation." It remains so today.

Barich has a gift for painting large word pictures, framing whole cities and bioregions in the space of a paragraph or two. The sweep of his vision causes him to trip on occasional facts; his account of the origin of Boontling, an impenetrable Mendocino County argot, is false, as are many of his place-name etymologies. Still, he conjures up descriptions that linger in the mind, as when he limns Los Angeles as "the world's first postapocalyptic, postmodern, postliterate city, a place without absolute boundaries that floated freely beyond the grasp of history, parody, and any concerns other than the momentary."

His ferreting out of oddments and ironies that alternately reinforce and destroy California stereotypes makes Barich's book especially entertaining. The official corporate biographers of both men, for instance, will not be pleased by his observation that Walt Disney and Ray Kroc (the founder of McDonald's) served together in an ambulance unit in World War I, where Kroc spent his leisure time in French restaurants and brothels while Disney carefully manufactured fake German helmets, complete with bullet holes and chicken blood. Disney's arts of deception would soon alter the very landscape of California, though Kroc seems to have left his knowledge of *haute cuisine* somewhere on the Western Front.

Barich wryly notes that despite a half-century of anti-Chinese (and later anti-Japanese) activism on the part of its Anglo overseers, California has long benefited in every way from its Asian ties, to say nothing of its Asian-American citizens. He takes little joy in pointing out one of the state's few current growth industries in a recession-mired economy when he notes that "only the prisons were as overcrowded as the public schools," and he warns that illegal immigration threatens to destroy an already strained network of social services.

Barich closes *Big Dreams* on a strangely optimistic note, given all that he has seen and recorded and his knowledge that the population of California can only grow while its resources wane. (Perhaps he has not heard, too, that Charles Manson's followers are more numerous today than they were in 1969.) Even a clear-eyed journalist, I suppose, has somewhere to indulge in fond speculation; and California has always been, and may always be, the place where Americans go to test their fantasies—and the weirder, the bigger, the better.

Gregory McNamee's most recent book is Gila: The Life and Death of an American River *(Crown).*

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Letter From Prague

by Stephen P. Halbrook

The Firearm as a Symbol of Freedom

◆

I am overwhelmed by the sight of the small monument shaped like a gravestone—inscribed *Obetem Komunismu* ("Sacrificed to Communism")—surrounded by flowers and pictures of martyrs from the 1948-1989 period in Czechoslovakia's history. Looking up, one sees the statue of St. Wenceslas and the Czech National Museum at the end of the wide boulevard forever seared into the world's consciousness by the Prague Spring of 1968. One senses the ghosts of the Soviet tanks and hears the faint echo of the machine-gun fire that killed the brave—and unarmed—freedom fighters.

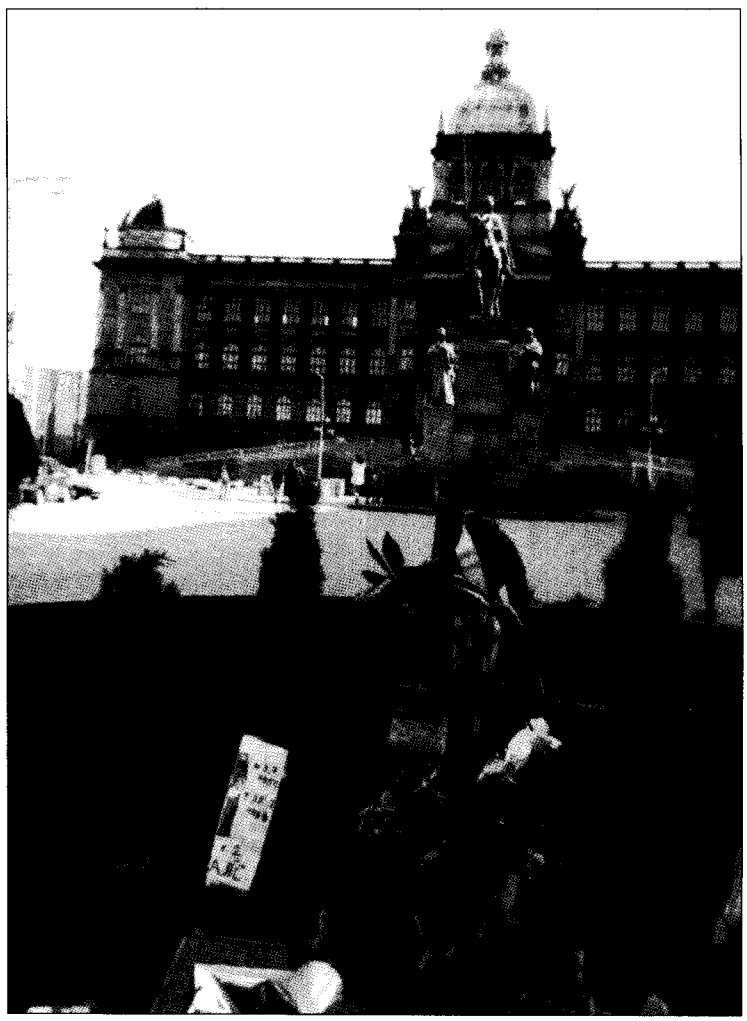
It is now 1994, the fifth year since liberation swept Eastern Europe. Czechoslovakia is now divided into the Czech Republic and Slovakia. From the gravestone I look left, and there it is—a colorful sign of a semiautomatic pistol advertising Kozap-Praha, one of the Czech Republic's many new firearms stores. I came upon this gun shop within two minutes of walking out of the train station, having just arrived from Nuremberg, Germany. You can select from a nice array of CZ, Beretta, Colt, and Smith and Wesson pistols and revolvers, as well as .22 rifles, center fire hunting rifles, and shotguns.

How symbolic—the new Czech right to keep and bear arms is just as much a herald of the death of tyranny as is the granite obituary to the dead. At the very time the United States Congress was voting to ban any firearm magazine holding over 10 cartridges, citizens of the post-communist bloc were purchasing pistols with magazines holding as many as 17 cartridges. It seems as if freedom is breaking out all over the world . . . except in America.

The gun shop clerk (who knew about as much English as I knew Czech) explained the one legal requirement for purchasing a pistol—he muttered something about "police" and made a stamping motion with his hand. Get your paperwork stamped, a routine formality for any law-abiding person, pay Czech crowns (Visa and Master Card are also accepted), and the pistol is yours. Not perfect freedom, but few people complain, for it was not long ago that all firearms were banned for everyone save a few Communist Party hacks.

The bookstore just across from my pension displays R.L. Wilson's *Colt: An American Legend* (not in English, of course) and gun magazines and books in Czech. (Few Czechs I encountered spoke any English, which is just now being widely taught. Some, particularly older people, speak a little German, which made life easy for me: my closest companion was a Czech-German phrase book. The second language is a result of the occupation: Russian.)

I am on a train ride to Brno. Rushing by is a hunting stand with roof and walls—European comfort. The man across from me speaks only Czech. As we pass through forested hills, I draw a stag and point out the window, inquiring with my expression, how is the hunting here? He shakes his head "yes" and makes like firing a rifle. He enthusiastically sketches a wild boar, rabbit, and goat, rapidly explaining in a language I do not understand, but I get the impression that the country is crawling with



Memorial to communism's victims.

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Advertisement for gun shop.

game.

My new friend draws a map of the Czech republic showing the best hunting areas. I show him a business card of the CZ firearms factory I am planning to visit. He draws a picture of a rifle cartridge on the map to show where an ammunition factory is located. I then take out the gun magazine I bought in Prague, and my friend instantly recognizes IPSC action pistol matches and other shooting sports now openly pursued in the Czech Republic. I surmise that my random encounter with this shooting enthusiast could be duplicated anywhere in the country.

The train arrives at Brno, and it is time for the longest taxi ride of my life—100 kilometers (60 miles) through the Czech countryside, passing horse-drawn carts, stout peasant women in traditional clothing, and hillsides of grapevines for making good Czech wine (priced at 50 Czech crowns, or about $1.50 a bottle). The taxi driver speaks no English but plays "Drivin'" by Richie Havens and other American disco tunes throughout our ride. Rock and roll is played all over the republic.

At last I arrive in Uhersky Brod, home of *Ceská Zbrojovka*, manufacturer of the "CZ" line of rifles, pistols, and shotguns. In addition to making the classic European hunting bolt rifles and double shotguns, this firm produces about 50,000 CZ75 semiautomatic pistols per year. One of the nicest 9mm pistols ever designed, the CZ75 was available to American consumers in the mid-1980's until the United States State Department somehow decided that *dis*couraging the Eastern European arms industry would weaken Soviet domination over those countries. (I even tried to persuade the BATF to reissue the import permits; the BATF claimed that the State Department would not consent.) The dissolution of the Soviet Union has again made these superior firearms available to Americans. The firm does beautiful engravings on special orders.

Milton Kubele and Ing. Antonín Václavík explain that the Czech firm began in 1936 but was moved during communist rule in the 1960's to the center of the country to be further away from Germany, which precipitated World War II by invading Czechoslovakia in 1938. The factory at Brno had made guns in World War I and still manufactures long guns. Confusion about the two factories persists because both engrave their firearms as being made in Brno.

My hosts explain that the "Velvet Revolution" of 1989 heralded the right of law-abiding people to buy guns. An ordinary citizen can own a CZ75 and partake in pistol matches. There were many hunters before the revolution, though nonparty members found it very difficult to get permission to own firearms.

There were only one or two gun stores in Czechoslovakia during the communist regime. Today, there are 27 gun shops in Prague alone, and about 120 across the country. There are also many gun clubs and shooting ranges, and citizens may use both private and military ranges.

The CZ factory makes several variations of 9mm pistols, including the 75, the improved 85, and the 75 Cadet (a .22 with the same frame size as the 75). One hundred thousand pistols are made each year. The Skorpion submachine gun is made for "special" purposes, and a look-alike semiautomatic is also produced. Fully automatic, it fires at a rate of 850 rounds per minute. It is held sideways because of unacceptable muzzle climb in the upright position.

Communism did not bring gun control to Czechoslovakia—it only continued Nazi atrocities. Milan Kubele, a postwar baby like myself, related what his father told him and what is generally remembered today: the first day the Nazis occupied Czechoslovakia, they put up posters in every town ordering the inhabitants to surrender all firearms, including hunting guns. The penalty for disobedience was death. Lists of potential dissidents and other suspects were already prepared, and those persons disappeared immediately. Gun owners were actually easy pickings for the Nazis, because registration of firearms with the

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government had been required by the First Republic, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Hunters were registered with the local police at Prague.

Firearms prohibition was an essential aspect of the repressive Nazi and Communist regimes from the Nazi occupation in 1939 through the Velvet Revolution of 1989. Two world wars left firearms all over Europe. Do Czechs obey all the laws, or have unregistered guns been secreted under the Nazis, Communists, and even today's Republic? As victims of Russian and German aggression, the Czechs have become crafty people. One Czech told me with a coy look that he did not know of anyone who would violate a gun regulation. Right.

Driving me back to Brno, my hosts talked of the problems of the Czech Republic but expressed optimism for its future: the lost economic security of the old socialist regime did not equal the true economic development ushered in by the advent of the free market. My own observations give a bird's-eye view of the Czech people in transition: creaky elevators in old buildings, people hard at work repairing the old and building the new, good red wine that costs $1.60 a bottle, vegetables and puppets for sale in the market, beautiful historic castles and great buildings that were never bombed in World War II, landscape scarred by irresponsible socialist industrial policies, beautiful forested areas peppered with quaint villages, old dilapidated train cars with no working toilets, and modern train cars with all the conveniences. Here is the transition from communism to free enterprise by a people who never believed in the former.

A taxi driver in Prague told me in German as I got out on the main boulevard to beware of robbers. I responded that we have plenty of them in America, too. Private crime has replaced government crime; that's progress, because individuals are never as capable as tyrannies of killing large numbers of innocents. If some Czechs are buying pistols for protection against thugs, they will still have them if (or is it when?) the Russian thugs eventually come back. Pistols will not stop tanks, but offer one more means of resistance.

As my Ceská Air flight climbed over Prague, I wondered how long this small country's newfound freedoms would last. The historic aggressors have been Russian and German expansionists. The best guarantee of freedom against the dangers they pose was and still is the right to keep and bear arms.

Stephen P. Halbrook is an attorney in Fairfax, Virginia, and author of That Every Man Be Armed: The Evolution of a Constitutional Right.

Letter From Serbia, Part II

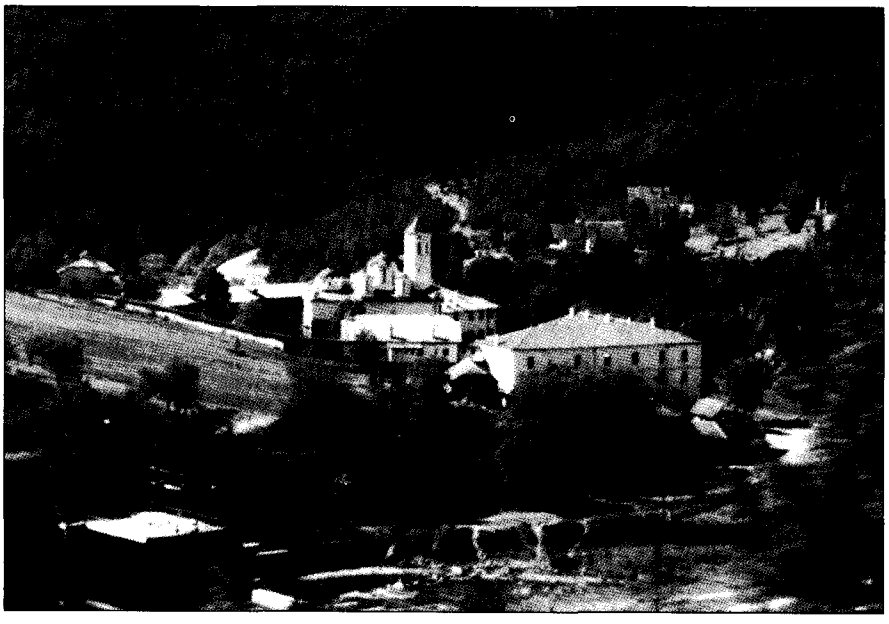
by Rajko Doleček

The Prospects for Peace

◆

I returned to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) last May and July and noticed that Serbia had changed dramatically since my last visits there in late 1993. The financial reforms of a 75-year-old Serbian university professor, Mr. Dragoslav Avramović, who has solid banking experiences in Yugoslavia and abroad, had stemmed the soaring inflation rate almost overnight. Prices had stabilized if not dropped; agricultural and industrial production had increased, the budget was balanced, and incomes, even pensions, had risen. The hard currency reserves markedly increased. Yugoslav citizens could even exchange their dinars for German marks one to one (up to 50 dinars). To avoid the printing of additional dinars to pay for the good crop (the present reserves of food could last for almost two years), Avramović had minted large quantities of gold coins, the ducats, with gold from Serbian mines. They were accepted with enthusiasm. Instead of minting only 100,000 as originally planned, a half-million of them were to be available soon.

Unemployment was still running around 30 to 40 percent in the FRY, largely because sanctions had cut off the country's trade links. But some towns were prospering, such as Vranje, in southern Serbia. Over half of its 65,000 inhabitants were employed. The giant YUMCO textile plant, one of the largest in Europe, had 13,000 employees; it imported some 10,000 tons of cotton last year alone. The SIMPO furniture manufacturer had about 6,000 workers, and the shoe manufacturers at Kostana make some five million pairs of shoes a year; the tobacco factory and the lead and zinc mines were thriving, too. These ventures make up the backbone of prosperous Vranje, whose bustling mayor Mr. Tomić is very proud of his town. The famous Serbian author Bora Stanković was born there, and the town was alive with characters from his plays. For the spiritual heritage of one millennium, it was exciting to visit the orthodox monastery St. Prohor Pčinjski near Vranje, to stay there overnight in the old hostel, to en-



St. Prohor Pčinjski Monastery near Vranje

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joy the excellent cuisine—including the delicious trout from the Pčinja River—and to meditate and pray at the monastery.

But troubles still abound for many FRY citizens, particularly for the pensioners who worked for many years in the West. Because of the sanctions, their pensions have been blocked, and because of the restrictions on visas, it is difficult if not impossible for them to travel to the country where they worked (e.g., France, Germany, Sweden) to collect their money. They were affluent before 1992, now they depend on whatever welfare is available.

Milo Djukanovič, prime minister of Montenegro (center)

As a consequence of the successful financial reforms, the shops and supermarkets were full once again. The Belgrade cafés and restaurants were bustling, and tourism was in full swing. Most of the gas stations were still closed, with the exception of a few private ones, but hundreds or even thousands of "gas smugglers" were selling from their private stocks. The authorities do not interfere, because these men supply the fuel that the private transport system needs. Many of the smugglers were Albanians, and Montenegro, the twin republic of FRY, is flooded with less expensive Albanian fuel. Of course, most Albanians hate the Serbs, but money and greed often trump history.

The neighboring countries had long since lost faith in America's and the E.U.'s promise to compensate them for the huge financial losses caused by sanctions against the FRY. During an international meeting of journalists in the FRY last May, the Bulgarians, Greeks, and Rumanians put their losses at four to five billion U.S. dollars each, the Ukrainians at two to three billion, and who knows how much Macedonians have lost. All of them had received only empty words and promises.

Serbs were pleased to hear from Bonn that the Nazi past of Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the former foreign minister of the German Republic, had finally been publicized. He had never forgotten the important role that the Serbs and Yugoslavia played in defeating Germany in the two world wars, and many Serbs to this day hold him primarily responsible for engineering the Yugoslav tragedy.

There was much discussion about the Pope's planned visit to Belgrade. Most members of the orthodox clergy objected to the idea. The Vatican had too vigorously supported the secession of Slovenia and Croatia; it even beat the E.U. in its rush to recognize them. Nor has the Catholic Church ever apologized to the Serbs for the role played by many Catholic clergy in the holocaust of Serbs from 1941 to 1945 in the independent state of Croatia. During that time, some 800,000 Serbs were murdered by the Croatian fascists and their Muslim allies from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many Catholic clerics collaborated with them. More than 200,000 orthodox Serbs were forced to convert at gunpoint. There were some Catholic clerics who protected and even risked their lives to save their Serbian brothers, but other Vatican circles helped the most notorious killers to escape at the end of the war to South America, Australia, and the Middle East. This was the well-known "rats channel," or "monastery path." One of its organizers was a Croatian Catholic cleric, Krunoslav Draganovic, the secretary of the order of St. Jerome's Brotherhood. Dozens of other clergymen helped him. The recent book by Simon Wiesenthal (*Justice Not Revenge*) recounts this story.

The availability of much-needed medical supplies and drugs had not improved. Babies and children, the chronically ill and the aged, were still dying from lack of treatment. The situation in the *Republika Srpska* (the Serbian part of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and in the Republic of Serbian Krajina had reached the crisis stage. Diabetics were still dying because there was no insulin and they had no money to buy it on the black market. The infant mortality rate was still rising ominously. One of the few international organizations trying to help was UNICEF.

Among the main topics of discussion in Serbia was the problem of Bosnian Serbs after the Contract Group Ultimatum. Would they accept it? Most people I spoke to said they would not, because the plan did not settle the constitutional problems of the three entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They believe it is impossible to have all of them in a single state or union, especially after this horrible civil war in which nobody is completely innocent. But the main obstacles to the peace agreement were the maps. Most of the Serbian people of Bosnia and Herzegovina live in its western part, where their capital city Banja Luka is located. Serbs from the Serbian Republic of Krajina are also there. They are connected with their brothers in eastern Bosnia and with Serbia by a thin corridor whose narrowest part, near Brčko, is only four to five miles wide. The Bosnian Serbs and the Serbs from Krajina opened this corridor in heavy fighting in 1992 and 1993. It is vital for their survival. Yet the Contact Group maps gave Brčko (at the Sava River) to the Muslim-Croatian federation, thus cutting the vital lifeline and leaving western Bosnia and Krajina at the mercy of, alas, hostile Muslims and Croats! It is said that this vital corridor would be replaced by a viaduct or something like one under U.N. protection, perhaps even with Russian soldiers patrolling it. But can the Bosnian Serbs trust the U.N.? Many Serbs see this as setting the stage for a possible replay of the massacres of 1941 to 1945.

The official FRY might try to per-

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suade or even compel the leaders of the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Contact Group plan and to try to improve the maps and the constitutional arrangements through negotiation at a later date. But is this realistic? Couldn't (or wouldn't) the hostile European-American coalition block any and all changes favorable to the Serbs?

During a press conference, the Montenegrin Prime Minister Milo Djukanovič discussed the problems of the modern Montenegrin merchant fleet. Montenegro had possessed about 40 ships. But immediately after sanctions were imposed, many ships were blocked, mostly in Western ports. They were not allowed to leave, and Montenegro had to pay about 100,000 U.S. dollars per day to the port authorities where the ships had been "arrested." If they refused to pay, the ships were to be confiscated and sold. A few of them were sold at auctions, at very low prices. Shipping, tourism, and aluminum mining represent about 70 to 75 percent of the Montenegrin income.

The Serbs I spoke to were still saddened and disappointed by the disinformation about them that continues to issue from the West. Why do Western media refuse to report Muslim and Croat offenses during the present official cease-fire in Bosnia and Herzegovina? What kind of stories would have been written if Serbs had initiated the offenses? The most depressing fact for the Serbs remains that they have been betrayed by their former allies, whom they considered to be close friends: the Americans, the British, and the French. How were they so easily manipulated?

When the Muslims and the Croats were killing each other during their war in 1993, thousands of Croats were fleeing their homes in Travnik, Konjice, Bugojno, etc., ahead of advancing Muslim forces, fearing reprisals. When they reached the Serb-held territories, they were treated in Serbian hospitals and then transported to Croat-held areas. During the last days of the autonomous western Bosnia (the Bihać enclave) of Fikret Abdić, tens of thousands of Muslims fled to the Serbian Republic of Krajina, seeking protection from their Muslim brothers. Did CNN, the *New York Times*, or *Time* report this?

Rajko Doleček is a professor of medicine at the University of Ostrava in the Czech Republic.

Letter From London

by Derrick Turner

The Barbarian Marshes

◆

Celt, Roman, Angle, Saxon, Dane, Norman, Pict—and Bengali, Afro-Caribbean, Turk, Arab, Chinese. Glyndebourne, swan-upping, roast beef and Maypoles—and arranged marriages, bowing to Mecca, *halal* meat, chop suey. Harris tweed—and saris. Anglicanism and Catholicism—and Diwali, Rastafarian New Year, Ramadan. Milton, Shakespeare—and Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison. All of the former, traditionally British things have been, are being, eclipsed by all of the latter, non-British things. Although I am not opposed to change as such, I rue all of these particular changes, which dilute and endanger the culture I hold most dear.

Although I am not British myself—I was born in the Irish Republic, to Anglo-Irish, Protestant parents—I have always been conscious of some affinity for Britain, and particularly England, which loomed on my horizon like a kindly elder relative. I regularly came here on holidays when I was younger, to marvel at the great cities and the beautiful landscapes where the houses stopped. I always had a strange sense of being at home here, however new and big it may have seemed to my juvenile eyes. I have an impression in my mind, still clear and fresh, which nourished, and nourishes, my superpatriotism—of new-leafed plane trees in the sunlight, the sound of sonorous bells, the sight of black taxis, walking under the trees and feeding ducks in St. James's Park, the glitter of the river and the smell of the autumn in Kew. It simply never occurred to me that England could be other than irreducible.

It was only after I came to live in London, in mid-1988, that I began to see that I had been hopelessly naive. Maida Vale, Kilburn, Ilford, West Hampstead, Whitechapel, and Deptford, none of which featured on any tourist's list, became more than just names to me—I lived in them all, in quick succession, six months here, a couple of months there. And I roamed far and wide, my *London* A-Z in my jacket pocket—I plunged into the terraced backstreets of Hackney, Bethnal Green, Mile End, the Isle of Dogs, Barking, the City, Southwark, Kensington, Ladbroke Grove, Islington, and Stepney, the very names like quotations from half-remembered history texts, or extracts from great books. I spent days walking alone along rainy or dusty residential streets, wandering around ancient churches and graveyards and exploring overgrown alleys dense with purple buddleia, nettle, and bits of bicycle, and I would read up later about the areas I'd visited. I wore a poppy on Remembrance Day, went to the Last Night of the Proms, and saw the fires blaze up on Bonfire Night. In a fairly short time, I came to know London far better than Dublin, and far better than did most Londoners. Soon, I could tell people the best way to get to Artillery Row, or where they should catch the number 53.

But my peregrinations around London were not just an education in geography, but also in the vexed questions of ethnicity and identity. I was continually

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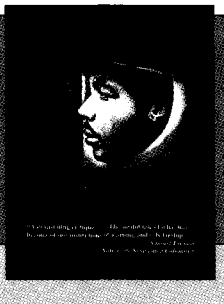

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startled anew by the fact that large chunks of London were not just no longer English, but were not even *British*. Huge numbers of people from entirely dissimilar backgrounds, countries, and races, speaking different languages and practicing different religions, immersed in cultures unlike any of those of Europe, had permanently settled in England. The significance of this came upon me at once; I suddenly realized that these places had not just been un-Englished, but had been *permanently* un-Englished. Not only were the local English people themselves disappearing from these areas, but it seemed as if all of their primeval roots, all of their history in these English heartland territories, were being set at naught.

This sheer *waste* of all the efforts of previous generations, and the *scale* of this dispossession, shocked me. To think that Cockneys are practically extinct in parts of the East End is a sobering thought. To walk around districts like Spitalfields, Southall, or Peckham, contrasting the unselfconscious vigor of the newcomers with the relatively apologetic, greying natives, is to put oneself in mind of the Tasmanian aborigines, or the semimythical "tall, red-haired" Guanches of the Canary Islands. I saw thousands of clenched brown fists punch the air in Parliament Square, outside "The Mother of Parliaments," on the day the Muslims gathered to demand that Salman Rushdie be put to death, and pondered the arrogant, placarded messages: "Islam—Today Our Religion, Tomorrow Your Religion." The indigenes were clearly in retreat on all fronts—and not just geographically. Churches were emptying, schools were slowly becoming "New Yorkized," criminals were being let off scot-free, and even self-styled "conservative" governments were handing over British independence to the E.E.C. On the one occasion I counted them in 1993, 18 of the acts in the BBC "Top Twenty" were Afro-Caribbean or partially so.

According to figures taken from the 1991 census, non-European settlement in London is concentrated in certain boroughs—Brent and Newham (40 to 50 percent of the population), Tower Hamlets, Lewisham, Ealing, and Hackney (30 to 40 percent), then smaller, but still substantial, numbers in all other London boroughs, except those on the borders of Kent and Essex. The generally younger age of individuals from the various non-European immigrant communities means that shortly after the turn of the century, white Britons will actually be an ethnic *minority* in four London boroughs—Brent, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Hackney—and will almost be in the minority in several others. The same story is being repeated, if on a smaller scale, in all other major British cities. (The census recorded the non-European population of Great Britain as 3,018,000, 92 percent living in England proper—approximately 5.5 percent of the total population.)

Although some on the far right would probably dub post-1945 immigration an "invasion," this immigration has been entirely pacific. Perhaps if it had been a *military* invasion, it might have met with resistance from more Britons. As it is, all except the tiny, neo-Nazi tainted parties of the far right and a few renegade conservatives, who regard culture as more important than economics, have been quiescent; most Britons do not seem to mind being told they are "racist" and that their institutions are oppressive. They do not even seem to mind writing out multiple-zero welfare checks for penurious immigrants, with their multifarious needs—and governments no doubt find it easier to go with the universalist flow than to risk censure from "the international community" by enforcing the stricter immigration controls, or pursuing the monoculturalist programs, that are now necessary if Britain is to retain something of its immemorial character. Government ministers, senior civil servants, academics, and intellectuals have been affected just as much as the middle classes by the universalist, chiliastic philosophies and vague feelings of collective racial guilt that have made these demographic changes possible.

Few could have foreseen what would follow in the wake of the trickle of relatively well-educated West Indians and Asians that started in 1945; to them, Britain was so strong and so close that they could not conceive of its dissolution. Impossibly cultivated and well-educated by today's standards, the war generation could not have imagined a situation when most Britons, even academics, would regard their own culture as worthless, or let the insane fallacies of deconstructionism, moral relativism, pluralism, equality, and Afrocentrism pass almost unchallenged.

But this intellectual challenge was not met, save with apology and retreat. This is why we have arrived at a time when there is a real danger of British culture and civilization vanishing forever. The stresses and strains inherent in multiracial societies have been much in evidence over the last year or so. The hysterical reaction to M.P. Winston Churchill's candid speech to Bolton Conservatives in May, which called for tougher immigration controls; the acquittal of those who had been convicted of killing policeman Keith Blakelock during a London race riot; Londoners injured by Kurdish bombs aimed at Turkish-owned properties; black M.P. Bernie Grant's speech in which he called for "reparations" for slavery and suggested some Afro-Caribbeans should consider moving back; the far-right British National Party's gain of a council seat in the East End of London (although they subsequently lost it, they only lost it by a very small margin, and polled well in other parts of the East End); the setting up of the "Muslim Parliament"; an increase in the number of successful lawsuits and complaints linked to alleged "harassment"; and an increase in the number of violent "racial incidents," including the murder of a 15-year-old white boy near London's King's Cross by a gang of Asian youths. All of these phenomena are insignificant in themselves, perhaps, but they have cumulative importance. There seems little doubt that British society will be irreparably damaged if the trends that permit these phenomena continue.

Although it is impossible to measure it, native resentment appears to be growing. One senses a mood of profound, if so far undirected, dissatisfaction in the air; and to be even *rather* right wing is beginning to become more acceptable. There is new tension between the right and left wings of the Conservative Party, the hitherto solid "rainbow coalition" is riven with dissension, and greater closeness to the rest of Europe has paradoxically brought us closer to the patriotic, traditional right that is so evident in other parts of the continent. Counterrevolutionary activity in the fields of education, trade unionism, and welfare has indirectly weakened multiculturalism by weakening multiculturalism's customary allies. Extremist Afro-Caribbean and Muslim organizations have become more active, further alienating an already stand-offish Middle England. And much of the indoctrination that passes for ed-

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ucation goes in one ear and straight out the other; a Commission for Racial Equality officer, visiting a Birmingham school a few years ago, despairingly reported that "Twenty years of anti-racist education have had no effect at all!"

But whatever British reaction there may or may not be in the future, the affectionately remembered London of Chaucer, Marlowe, Wordsworth, Johnson, Conan Doyle, Dickens, Noel Coward, and *My Fair Lady* is long gone, except from the tourist guides. Now comes a London of disparate races and social and sexual minorities subsidized and held together politically by inertia and a dwindling productive class made up of liberal-minded natives. Although in some areas life will remain reasonably civilized for the time being, elsewhere it will get steadily worse (and not just for the ever more outnumbered natives). As the dwindling class dwindles, the ties that still bind will loosen and loosen, until they are completely undone. That all the hubbub of London life, past and present, might be stilled forever is too awful a thought to think, but we must think it nonetheless. All things must pass, I know, but why must *this* pass, and *now*? I think of all that I have seen and heard since I came to London, and I am like a latter-day Roman, looking out from a lighted room over dark barbarian marshes.

Derrick Turner is a freelance writer in London.

Letter From Grenada

by Geoffrey Wagner

Semper Fidel?

◆

It is over ten years now since the last Cuban left Grenada. My wife and I happened to own a retirement property on the island less than a hundred meters from the huts put up to house the thousand-odd "freedom fighters" sent down by Fidel Castro (whom I met) to spread the Good Old Cause. During those four years (1979-1983) we maintained a round-the-clock occupancy of our house, hoping to prevent the expropriations that had overtaken others. More than one ex-pat had returned from shopping in the capital, St. George's, to confront an "off-limits" guard outside his domicile. There was no American embassy on board and only a chargé in Barbados. Today, with cruise ships pouring out passengers daily, many visiting the Ronald Reagan monument opposite our own abode, friends ask if we weren't afraid during this period.

We were not. At least not of the Cuban day (and night) workers who kept a low profile and were policed by intelligence operatives from the celebrated DGI (Dirección General de Inteligencia). They were, alas, a cowed, glum lot, whose intent was to earn points, *puntas*, by such overseas assignments, whether in Grenada, Angola, Suriname, or South Yemen. These points made them eligible for perks on their return home, putting them at the head of the line for a toaster or whatever else in their local *supermercado*. What they desired, and surreptitiously acquired from us, was electronic gadgetry, transistors, calculators, and the like. A Grenadian on a work party would sell a digital watch to a Cuban trucker returning to Havana the next day. Being paramilitary the Cuban could avoid customs checks and sell his loot in his homeland for five times what he'd paid for it.

I watched batch after batch of these military engineers brought down to the Pointe Salines strip in Russian trucks, many still bearing Soviet insignia on their sides, such was their confidence. I sometimes walked through their dormitories to chat with friends and observed the AK-47s clipped beside each bunk, while down the road from us a shed openly displayed Soviet SA-9 Gaskin surface-to-air missiles and quadruple-barreled TSU anti-aircraft guns (whose chief firing site has recently been made into the swimming-pool complex of a luxury hotel). Having served in the military myself, I felt sorry for these prisoners of communism. If you could turn Havana into a tropical Moscow, and a *habañero* into the sort of torpid tractor driver who crossed the road to supplement his wretched rations (mainly *pan y leche*), you could presumably do anything in the field of "human engineering."

But looking back, it is sobering to consider the power of the Brezhnev/Andropov gridlock on the region at this time. Havana's Central American Bureau was announcing triumph everywhere and pouring daily filth on America. Speaking at a "Working Class Against Imperialism" conference in East Berlin, Jesús Montané, foreign relations head of Cuba's Central Committee, declared, "The revolutionary victories in

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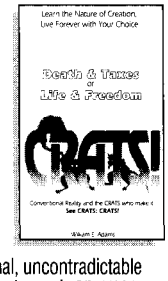

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Nicaragua and Grenada are the most important events in Latin America since 1959." *Eheu fugaces*, indeed. The new "revolutionary" Grenadian government, established by a 1979 coup and to be eliminated by a bloody massacre in 1983, set up embassies in Cuba, Libya, Algeria, North Korea, Syria, and (later) Russia. Everything seemed to be running their way. The appeal sent to the British government by neighboring St. Lucia's John Compton was ignored by Whitehall, pooh-poohed in fact, while in Dominica Patrick John (lately let out of prison) was doing his best to overthrow the eminently sensible Eugenia Charles. Daniel Ortega had brought Nicaragua into the fold; Trinidad and Venezuela and even Mexico were uncovering Cuban espionage rings trained ("studied") at Moscow's Patrice Lumumba University or at Pyongyang's terrorist-training camp in North Korea.

I often wonder what has happened to all the mercenaries of this mistaken ideology, now that Russia has left center stage. Have they, in the Caribbean, all vanished into the thin air shadowing Jamaica's Michael Manley, whom I saw shrieking "*Viva la revolución!*" at a Non-Aligned Movement meeting and promising to construct "a new Caribbean"? Have they taken heart from the elected victory in Guyana of the Chicago-educated Marxist dentist Cheddi Jagan, more of a realist than all of them put together? The old comrades are still around, all right, like St. Lucia's pro-Rasta George Odlum, Dominica's Oliver Seraphin, Alan Louisy, and many others. In Grenada, the heart of the Castroite movement itself, there are a few dispersed relics, like the MBPM (Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement), feebly trying to retain some hold on the young, while Bishop's assassins are still held in prison. An irony prevails, however, in that Cuba's incumbency left a certain legacy in medical training on the island. I am told that a Cuban-trained dentist is quite excellent, and I do know that my wife and I prefer a similarly trained vet for our pedigree German Shepherds. He is truly skilled and caring in an enclave devoid of like people and seems uninterested in ideology despite having spent six months in Moscow's elite Vystrel Academy.

Still, I wonder where the intellectual giants of the era are today, truly imbued men like Osvaldo Dorticós of Cuba's Politburo or its Foreign Minister Isidorio Peoli ("The revolutionary awakening in Latin America and the Caribbean is an irreversible fact that is shaking the foundations of U.S. Imperialism"). What of the DGI honchos across the road from us, one the sophisticated second son of an Irish mother, who kept on trying to persuade me to visit Cuba? When I said I could not, being American, they guaranteed that nothing would appear in my passport. It was precisely against this enticement of their youth to "study" in the notorious Isle of Pines that Trinidad and Guyana had been complaining.

In the last year of Cuban Grenada, when the military nature of the airport became clear and the *caudillo* was showing his Stalinist filiation, my wife and I became a tad depressed. A high-ranking general in the GRU (or military intelligence of the KGB), Gennadi Sazhenev, was sent up to tiny Grenada from Moscow's South American desk, in the Argentine no less. Him, too, I met, a handsome man with a full head of white hair and accentless English. He downstaged the Cuban ambassador (Rizo) on the island, rumored to have since been executed, and clearly came to apply the whip to the dragging airport construction, scheduled to be completed by March 1984, ten years after independence. Little mentioned in the press, Sazhenev brought with him a couple of hundred bullet-headed Spetsnaz commandos: the term abbreviates *Spetsaznacheniya*, groups dispatched to target countries under embassy cover. One of their missions had been to determine how to flood the London Underground. In Grenada they were rudely dealt with by the 82nd Airborne on intervention, and it was from that force that we obtained the list of houses to be taken over, ours preeminent among them as the future Russian embassy. Instead, it was used to shelter the Governor-General Sir Paul Scoon and his wife during the October 1983 hostilities.

Against this bleak background it was hard not to feel some sympathy for the rank-and-file Cubans we got to know in those days. One might want to sell us a fish he had caught, but the transaction would have to take place clandestinely, in the bush, and when the Russians came the secrecy intensified. Plus, the camp opposite us sprouted a multidecibel speaker system, blaring Castro's speeches (*colonialistas . . . imperialistas*) to the snores of the *compañeros*.

Amid these memories, I especially treasure one of Pablo, a paunchy old bulldozer operator who used to puff up to our house for water. When he learned that I had been a literature professor, his eyes lit up and he began to produce grimy slips of paper from his pants pockets and to read me his poems thereon, all filled with *alma* and *corazón*. After one recitation he looked up at me with hope in his face and said, "So you see, Professor, I'm not a bulldozer operator. I'm a poet and you're going to take me back with you to America when you go."

Such, alas, was not to be. But wherever old Pablo may be today, I'd like him to know that the poems he pressed on me, together with that list bequeathing the house in which my wife and I still live to Mother Russia, are safely lodged along with other Grenadian memorabilia in the Ronald Reagan Library in California.

Geoffrey Wagner is an emeritus professor of English at the City University of New York and author of, among other works, Red Calypso *(Regnery), which deals with Cuban adventurism in the southern Caribbean.*

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SOCIETY

Covert Policing in Modern America

by Philip Jenkins

When the former communist bloc disintegrated, the opening of secret police files in several European countries demonstrated the incredibly thorough hold that the clandestine state had possessed over ordinary citizens. In East Germany, for example, State Security (*Stasi*) files revealed the existence of vast networks of control and surveillance in any area of life that might have produced dissidence or antistate activity. The whole society, it seemed, had been founded on a culture of mutual suspicion and denunciation, which overwhelmed any existing bonds of family or friendship. For Westerners, the exposure of the *Stasi* files has enhanced still further our post-1989 triumphalism, the sense that the Cold War was indeed a moral confrontation on the lines long presented by hawks and Reaganites, and earlier attempts to argue for a "moral equivalence" between East and West have become wildly unfashionable. Already, there is an emerging postcommunist literature comparable to earlier works on fascism, studying the pervasive moral corruption of totalitarian states.

The United States does not have a *Stasi*, and comparisons may seem inappropriate. However, the last three decades have witnessed quite dramatic changes in the practices of law enforcement in this country, especially at the federal level, all of which tend toward an unhealthy and undemocratic emphasis on covert policing, with all that implies in terms of "stings," provocateurs, entrapment, denunciation, and mutual betrayal. Perhaps the most disturbing thing about these trends is that they have been so readily accepted without widespread discussion; they have not led to any significant public debate. With a few notable exceptions, like Gary Marx's fine study *Under Cover* (1988), covert policing has made little impression in the scholarly literature on either criminal justice or political science. Yet there now exist clandestine state apparatuses that pose real dangers to the political and judicial framework of this nation.

The idea of using spies and infiltrators against political opponents or subversives was already an ancient tactic when the United States was founded, but it was perfected here in the 19th century by the Pinkerton detective agency in its confrontations with Confederate spies and Union terrorists. More recently, the FBI became the leading practitioner of infiltration into suspect groups, with communist and other leftist organizations as the chief targets. In the mid-1970's, a series of journalistic and congressional investigations exposed a pattern of flagrant and widespread illegality in the operation of schemes like COINTELPRO, the FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program, and the CIA's MK/ULTRA. The "black bag" tactics employed in such ventures were less shocking to public opinion than the targets, which represented a broad cross-section of the liberal and radical left, virtually none of which had any significant contacts with the Soviet-bloc spies cited as the major justification for these measures.

From the mid-1970's, federal justice agencies became far more conscious of the legal environment in which they were required to operate and turned their attentions to targets that attracted little public support, including drug dealers, corrupt politicians, and labor unions penetrated by organized crime. For the general public, the first fruits of the new policy became apparent in 1980 with the exposure of the ABSCAM "sting," a critical venture that conditioned popular attitudes and expectations for years to come. Briefly, suspicions of organized crime influence in New Jersey casinos led to a scheme in which the FBI hired a con-man to pose as an Arab sheikh seeking to invest in Atlantic City (hence "Arab-scam"). The plan succeeded beyond the wildest expectations of its sponsors, and the putative sheikh was courted by many of the most powerful politicians in the middle states. Ultimately, a U.S. senator and five representatives were prosecuted, and a dozen other congressmen were left to breathe sighs of relief.

ABSCAM established the stereotypes for all succeeding cases: the daring and almost humorous elements of the plan, with the "sting" term borrowed from the 1973 movie starring Paul Newman and Robert Redford; the melodrama of the confrontations with the politicians, depicted as greedy betrayers of public trust; and the memorable visual imagery of grainy films showing the transfer of bags of unmarked cash. The whole operation had an undoubted populist appeal that carried over to subsequent enterprises, in all of which the "stingers" and infiltrators were heroes. Stings proliferated during the 1980's, with MIPORN, LILREX, AZSCAM, among others, an increasing number of which were mounted by state agencies. The range of targets expanded to include white-collar and corporate criminality, with FBI infiltrators posing as futures traders or representatives of defense contractors.

Such tactics have often been successful. Mafia families in particular have been disrupted in most major metropolitan areas, and virtually all successful antidrug operations rely on either stings or infiltrators. Undercover tactics have thus produced an impressive haul of malefactors, in circumstances where their guilt is clear for all to see. Such methods are perhaps the only ones that have any chance of succeeding against a crime that is ultimately based on mutual consent and in which neither party will complain to the authorities. Prostitution offers a classic example; the absence of a victim is used to justify the common practice of having policewomen pose as prostitutes in order to elicit illegal invitations from potential clients.

Morally, a great gulf separates the horrors of the *Stasi* files from the activities of a local American vice squad, but there is still much that is troubling in recent developments, especially in cases where legislators have been targeted. At the most obvious level, prosecutorial decisions are made by a U.S. Attorney, and people in this position almost always have strong political connections in addition to ambitions of their own. Prosecutors have at least the potential

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to destroy or discredit their rivals. In the ABSCAM case, it was alleged that the decision to target politicians in this particular area reflected the Carter administration's desire to subvert potential supporters of rival candidates in the forthcoming presidential primaries. This charge was apparently without substance, but the opportunity for selective investigation and prosecution is perilous.

Nor need the political implications involve such grand national divisions, as is suggested by the case of Michael Matthews, former mayor of Atlantic City, New Jersey. During the 1980's he was regarded as a close friend of the local Mafia family and thus became the target of an FBI sting operation in which he was caught attempting to extort money from a dummy corporation. So far, this appears to be a simple case of detection and punishment, but the next stage of the case was extraordinary. Government prosecutors offered Matthews immunity from punishment if he would agree to continue in office as a government informant and to gather incriminating information against his mob allies. In order to encourage him in this venture, prosecutors told Matthews of another New Jersey officeholder who had made a similar deal. We know about these transactions only because Matthews declined the offer and went to trial, but just how many other politicians and officeholders have been placed in a similar position and accepted the blandishments of a U.S. Attorney? Are they still "in place" today, serving the interests of the Justice Department while deluding their electors into thinking that they are fulfilling their proper mandates?

Equally instructive is the case of the former head of the Teamsters union, Jackie Presser, who from 1977 to 1986 was a valued FBI informant. At this time, the Teamsters were a powerful force in national affairs, as one of the few major unions to support the Republican Party, and a generous source of political donations. The FBI agent in charge of this case has said that direct contact with Presser ended in 1983 when he formally ascended to the presidency of the union, on the praiseworthy grounds that subsequent links would be politically improper. Were there other cases in which the controlling agents were not so fastidious and some or other law enforcement agency has in effect been directing the political fortunes of a union or political party, a business or church? And would we know if this were the case? Judges and lawyers constitute another recurrent target of recent covert policing endeavors, and compromised judges and attorneys have been recruited to entrap and incriminate their colleagues, even to "wear a wire." Imagine such a judge, dependent for professional survival on government goodwill, and ask if he or she would be immune from government pressure in any case in which the stakes were sufficiently high.

Apart from the political implications, there are serious dangers implicit in the basic assumptions of clandestine policing, issues that never emerge in the media romanticizations of the heroic undercover agent. It takes remarkable fortitude to maintain a fictitious persona day in and day out for a period of months or years, and the psychological trauma to the individual agent can be severe and lasting. In the early 1980's, one of the most significant anti-organized crime infiltrations ever mounted was utterly wrecked when the agent responsible for the MIPORN ("Miami Pornography") investigation suffered a breakdown from his attempt to lead such a double life. To quote the title of the book on the case, he was *Lost Under Cover*, a common phenomenon.

Furthermore, to be an infiltrator or a defector in place requires participation or at least acquiescence in illegal activities, which therefore proceed with the knowledge and consent of law enforcement agencies. Lesser evils are permitted by these agencies ostensibly for greater public benefits, but the "lesser evils" often appear quite substantial in their own right. We know in retrospect that in the late 1960's, law enforcement agencies were effectively controlling a substantial portion of the illegal drug traffic in major cities like New York, with narcotics officers distributing drugs on the streets in an attempt to penetrate illegal organizations. Usually, favored dealers were employed as intermediaries. They received drugs, which they sold, and supplied information to their police controls. Some, but only some, of the drugs issued were reclaimed on arrest; the remainder often passed to the dealer as payment. Unless the natural laws of bureaucratic dynamics have been repealed, it is certain that a similar pattern exists today in the urban cocaine trade. This model is scarcely prepossessing, even if we assume that all the police officers involved in the operation are of the highest integrity; the temptations for vigorous "meat-eating" corruption are clearly present.

The same dangers apply to the whole system of police informants, who are customarily allowed to get away with anything short of murder so long as they deliver a sufficient quota of less fortunate criminals to their handlers. Approved informants, state-licensed gangsters, have been known to set up criminal operations to have them detected and broken by police, so that police and informants will share benefits in the form of official praise and reward money. Any shrewd police officer knows that the safest way to secure wealth from office is judicious use of provocation to generate reward money and not the flagrant and risky drug ventures that make the headlines. Recent police scandals in Western Europe have evoked the cynical assessment that a "good" police department is one that solves more crimes than it generates.

It is all too easy for informants to turn into provocateurs and to generate problems at least as serious as those they were put in place to resolve. There is a classic example of this in the history of the secret police of Czarist Russia, the *Okhranka*, which so penetrated dissident opposition groups that police agents effectively controlled and directed terrorist campaigns. Uncontrollable agents reinforced their credibility by undertaking ever more daring and savage operations, including the assassination of politicians and the widespread destruction of property. By 1914, half the state apparatus was attempting to solve the crimes perpetrated by the other half. This bizarre double world, this wilderness of mirrors, is often found in intelligence and counterespionage, though it is little appreciated outside the profession. In the 1970's, a British newspaper polled serving and former intelligence operatives about which fictional work best captured the spirit of their profession, presumably expecting a chorus of praise for Tom Clancy, John le Carré, or even Ian Fleming. The answer, however, was G.K. Chesterton's little-read *The Man Who Was Thursday*, a phantasmagoric Edwardian novel that depicts a battle between the British police and the leadership of the Supreme Anarchist Council. It soon becomes apparent that all the *soi-disant* anarchists are in fact police officers, and vice versa, and the same mysterious figure "Sunday" freely ma-

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nipulates both sides.

If this seems like fantasy, it is useful to recall some events closer to home, such as the spectacular case in the 1980's that began with Frank Varelli, who was employed by the FBI to investigate the possible subversive groups opposing American policies in Central America, groups such as the Salvadoran solidarity organization CISPES. The ensuing investigation was required for bureaucratic reasons to posit a terroristic threat, as only imminent danger of this kind justified the suspension of congressional controls on intelligence gathering, and there were even spurious reports of a plot to assassinate President Reagan at the 1984 Republican Convention. By this point, about half of the FBI's field offices were involved to a greater or lesser extent in investigating and combating these imaginary menaces.

Nor is the CISPES case a rare event in American history. It is not quite certain if the Ku Klux Klan and their neo-Nazi allies have ever achieved the status attained by the U.S. Communist Party in the 1950's, when over half the membership was reporting directly to some government agency or other, but they came close. Such close affinities can probably be blamed for most of the conspiracy theories in our history. When there is a terrorist outrage or an assassination, it is likely that some official agency will have had a suspect group or individual under surveillance, or might have penetrated the group concerned. To avoid charges of complicity or negligence, the agency is likely to go to great lengths to conceal this connection, thereby exacerbating matters by raising questions of a cover-up and by drawing suspicion that it had some responsibility for the atrocity. This is the most probable explanation for bizarre official actions in cases like the Greensboro massacre of anti-Klan demonstrators in 1979, as well as the Kennedy assassination.

In matters of terrorism, covert policing poses insuperable dilemmas. Official agencies must attempt to infiltrate potentially troublesome groups, and agents must establish their credibility by participating in dangerous or criminal actions. But where and when must the line be drawn between joining such activities and actually promoting them, or indeed permitting terrorist actions to occur? The group that probably carried out the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 had long been penetrated by an agent reporting at least to the Jordanian secret service and probably to the Germans, while more recently the World Trade Center bombing in New York City has revealed a complex network of double- and triple-agent operations. At the least, it appears that the terrorist group was thoroughly penetrated by an agent of the Egyptian government and the FBI, who had long known that bomb attacks in New York were planned, though preventive measures were never taken. The CIA recruited and trained the terrorists, the FBI spied on them, and they still managed to come close to toppling one of the twin towers. It would be wonderful to think that when the full story of the World Trade Center case is known, it will trigger a long overdue public inquiry into the morality and effectiveness of covert policing and counterintelligence, but realistically speaking, hopes are not high.

When such issues do emerge in public debate, it is in the context of some high intrigue such as a terrorist act or an assassination, but this conceals the extent to which we have accepted the principles of covert policing, denunciation, and secret informants in our everyday lives. Often, the "wedge" that justifies such intrusions comes in the form of a particularly heinous or unpopular type of crime or social menace, against which we are told that any countermeasures are appropriate. The vast majority of us will never suffer the consequences of an antiterrorist operation gone wrong or be entrapped in an organized crime sting. On the other hand, we are beginning to travel the information superhighways, and the government has told us that we cannot communicate information free from official surveillance, the rationale being the "ultimate evils" of drugs and money-laundering. Our children go to schools where they attend compulsory antidrug *agitprop*, in which they are encouraged to denounce friends or family members "for their own good." Schools and media spread the same Orwellian message about evils like child abuse, and in both cases denunciation is facilitated by the ever-growing net of anonymous "hot lines" and "tip lines." Among the most popular shows on television are true-crime programs in which viewers are invited to assist the police by denouncing offenders. Initially, the targets were egregious serial killers or terrorists, but now the electronic vigilantes are urged to search for child-support defaulters, petty thieves, and even city sticker violators. We are not too far from the day when those who utter politically or ethnically injudicious remarks will similarly be denounced before the enraged masses.

Hot lines and clandestine denunciation have become so entrenched in American culture that we are starting to consider them from a European perspective. Most Continental European nations derive their legal principles from the authoritarian traditions of Roman law, but they have also experienced totalitarianism or occupation, often both. Consequently, nations like France and Germany have a visceral cultural antagonism to the encouragement of denunciation. In France, hot lines, rewards, and wanted posters were virtually taboo after 1945, as they raise too many memories of earlier calls to hand in Jews or Resistance fighters. They only reappeared at the height of a singularly bloody terrorist campaign in the mid-1980's, and they have never been fully accepted. American police officers seconded to Germany have been appalled at the seriousness with which their counterparts take legal restrictions against wire-tapping and electronic eavesdropping. Partly because they never suffered occupation, the United States and Britain are unusual among Western countries in their desire to turn ordinary citizens into police auxiliaries and communal block wardens.

The American culture of denunciation might not be susceptible to thorough reform in the near future, but might we not at least consider limiting the worst potential abuses? One vital step might be a prohibition on official agencies taking action on any form of anonymous information, without external corroboration. Alternatively, the new technology of telephone-caller identification raises the hope that we might soon see the regular publication of the identities of all public-spirited citizens who regularly turn in their friends and neighbors for drug use or possession, child abuse, elder abuse, Sabbath-breaking, battering, or whatever the vogue offense of the hour might be. It would be helpful if films and television programs would rid themselves not only of excessive violence, but of romanticized and heroic depictions of the spy, the defector, and the eavesdropper.

But ultimately, these changes would be no more than palliatives. What we

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need is a fundamental reexamination of our priorities in dealing with criminal and deviant behavior and a reconsideration of whether the remedies proposed for issues such as drugs and public corruption are not worse than the disease. We need to reemphasize the absolute need to respect privacy and personal communication, except where serious public interests are genuinely at stake. We must assess the value of obedience to law when that is maintained chiefly or solely by the constant fear that anyone we deal with may inform the authorities of our peccadilloes, and ultimately we must question whether a democratic system can be based on mutual fear and suspicion.

Philip Jenkins is a professor of religious studies and history at Pennsylvania State University and author of Using Murder: The Social Construction of Serial Homicide *(1994).*

Peanut Butter—The Next Menace

by Jay Cornell

Day 1. A celebrity chokes to death on a peanut butter sandwich.

Day 2. Headlines: "Celebrity's Fatal Snack." "Shocked Fans Mourn Hero." The American Alliance of Alarmist Research Groups (AAARG) reports that 10,000 Americans died in 1992 from choking on peanut butter, and demands warning labels, tougher laws, and increased federal spending. Victims Advising People In Discrimination (VAPID) points to studies showing that peanut butter chokers are disproportionately minority, female, children, and poor. VAPID calls for a nationwide boycott, a federal investigation, and increased federal spending. Editorialists agree that the tragedy is a "wake-up call" that draws attention to a national problem. A major newspaper reports that the celebrity had 55-gallon drums of peanut butter in his basement.

Day 3. Headline: "Extra-Chunky Style: A Spreading Risk?" A police photo of the celebrity's table knife, smeared with peanut butter, is leaked. It appears on page one of all major newspapers and on the network news.

A CNN Special Report: *Jars of Death: An American Crisis*.

Senator Barbara Boxer points out that the United States has a higher rate of peanut butter deaths than Canada or Luxembourg. She decries "institutional sexism" in the peanut industry and calls for a congressional investigation, warning labels, tougher regulations, more FDA Snack Inspectors, increased federal spending, and passage of national health insurance.

Surgeon General Jocelyn Elders calls the celebrity a "martyr" and chides the Pope for his "shameful record of silence" on peanut butter, "a threat to us all."

Greenpeace issues a statement linking peanut consumption to ocean pollution, global warming, and ozone depletion. Protests force some supermarkets to pull peanut butter off their shelves. Rush Limbaugh mocks the "nut nuts" and eats a jar of peanut butter during his radio show.

Day 4. Columnist Molly Ivins says Limbaugh "preaches family values, but practices behavior that endangers society's most vulnerable." She points out that former President Reagan never used the words "peanut butter" in a speech and that he vetoed bills that would have increased the number of FDA Snack Inspectors, who are underpaid and often minority women. "It's another tragic page in Reagan's *Big Book of Neglect*."

At the funeral service (broadcast live on CNN), the tearful widow announces the formation of Condiment Control, a nationwide advocacy group devoted to restricting the availability of all sandwich spreads. Her attorney announces a $100 million lawsuit against peanut butter makers, supermarket chains, peanut farmers, and tableware manufacturers. Hillary Clinton denounces "peanut profiteers," but disavows Elders' remarks about the Pope.

FDA Commissioner David Kessler announces a recall of all "extra-chunky" peanut butters. He asks for more Snack Inspectors and the power to regulate all nut butters as drugs. Kessler also says the FDA is considering mandatory viscosity labeling, or even a requirement that nut butters be sold only in liquid form. Cashew and almond producers protest.

Attorney General Janet Reno, citing statistics which suggest that peanut processors intentionally target women and minorities with dangerous food, announces an investigation into possible civil rights violations.

A Current Affair pays $100,000 for an interview with a friend of the celebrity, who claims the celebrity often talked with his mouth full.

Antique and collectible shops report a run on peanut memorabilia.

Day 5. A new poll finds peanut butter is now the number two public concern, edging out North Korean nuclear weapons and homelessness.

In a speech at Howard University, a Nation of Islam official calls on all blacks to support the VAPID boycott. He says that peanut butter was "invented by Jews to choke our black brothers and sisters" and receives a standing ovation. The Congressional Black Caucus refuses to comment.

In a segment of *Dateline*, "Sandwiches of Shame," NBC broadcasts graphic footage of a dog choking on peanut butter. Oliver Stone is interviewed and says he has evidence of a plot against progressives by the CIA and peanut industry.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest holds a joint press conference with two of Ralph Nader's consumer groups, Deadly Bread Alert and the Anti-Jelly Action Coalition. They demand tougher nut butter regulation and warn of even greater threats still little known to the public.

President Clinton nominates a disabled Native American lesbian as the new "Snack Czar," and asks Congress for a $1 per jar tax to fund a "moderate, preliminary" $200 million emergency education effort. A new 40-person office will be jointly managed by Vice President Gore, the FDA, and the United Nations.

Day 6. A new poll shows President Clinton's poor approval ratings have not changed, despite the administration's swift response to the peanut butter furor. Proclaiming a willingness to work with the administration, a group of moderate Republicans announces a proposal for a 25 cent per jar tax, to be phased in over three years.

Outraged by the *Dateline* segment, animal rights groups announce a boycott of NBC.

"People Who Still Eat Peanut But-

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ter": next on *Donahue*.

The reports of large quantities of peanut butter in the celebrity's basement prove to be false.

At a press conference, a former classmate announces that he regularly shared peanut butter sandwiches with the Snack Czar nominee.

Day 7. President Clinton withdraws his nomination.

Hillary Clinton denies rumors of peanut futures trading: "There's no evidence." Sources say the White House staff is in disarray: "It's headless-chicken time."

NBC admits that the dog in the *Dateline* segment was actually force-fed several jars of peanut butter mixed with epoxy. The AAARG technical consultant defends the procedure, but a producer is fired anyway. Animal rights groups call off their boycott. Editorialists criticize the media's mishandling of the whole story, which also leads the weekend political talk shows:

> "On a scale of zero to ten, with zero being no harm and ten being political Armageddon, how damaging is this 'peanut panic' to President Clinton? I ask you, Freddy the Beadle Barnes!"
>
> "A four and rising unless he kills the tax idea."
>
> "Eleanor!"
>
> "Maybe a point five, but it does help health care reform, and the peanut industry might be forced to clean up its act, which is good."
>
> "Jack!"
>
> "A one. Everyone will forget it by November."
>
> "Mort!"
>
> "A three. It's another Clinton stumble, and he doesn't need that right now."
>
> "The correct answer is two!"

Day 14. Plummeting sales, low prices, and lawsuits force some peanut farmers and processors to declare bankruptcy. Tons of unwanted peanut products are donated to African aid programs.

Day 21. *The Nation* cover story: "Uncle Sam's Death Spread: The Racist Plan to Choke the Third World."

Day 34. A small item in some newspapers, near the back: Increased unemployment in peanut-growing regions and higher farm price-support payments are projected to cost $300 million in the current fiscal year.

Day 55. A small item in some newspapers, near the back: A Justice Department spokesperson announces that the investigation into possible civil rights violations by the peanut industry has been dropped for lack of evidence. VAPID criticizes the decision. Sources estimate the investigation cost $2 million.

Day 90. A small item in some newspapers, near the back: AAARG issues a correction regarding the number of deaths from eating peanut butter. The actual number for 1992, the latest year for which figures are available, is three.

Jay Cornell writes from Berkeley, California.

SPORTS

Baseball and Marital Permanence

by William R. Mattox, Jr.

The game of baseball is centered on *home*: pitchers throw the ball over *home* plate, batters hit *home* runs, and fans root for the *home* team. Apparently, baseball's preoccupation with home is no accident. According to a recent study by Denver psychologist Howard Markham, the average divorce rate in cities that have major league baseball teams is 28 percent lower than in cities that lack a major league franchise. Markham says this is because baseball inspires "communication, fun, and friendship," and though his study does not mention it, baseball does have a rather curious record of promoting matrimony.

Over the years, baseball promoters have carried numerous "Will You Marry Me?" proposals on their electronic scoreboards. Some have hosted pregame weddings in which couples walk "down the aisle" (from the pitching mound to home plate) under a canopy of baseball bats held by players lined up on each side. And in what has to rank among the all-time tackiest promotions, the Atlanta Braves once held a "Wedlock and Headlock Night," which featured a mass wedding ceremony before the game and a professional wrestling match afterwards.

Although Markham's research is not intended to be taken seriously, it does raise two intriguing questions: What regional differences exist in divorce rates? And what factors explain these differences? Answering these questions should offer some clues about how to reduce the high divorce rate in the United States today.

Perhaps the easiest way to think of regional differences in divorce is to think not of baseball but of another summer pastime: bathing suits. It is strange but true that the divorce rate of any place in the continental United States can be predicted by knowing the number of days out of the year women there wear swim suits. The more warm weather days suitable for bathing attire, the higher the divorce rate. To illustrate, draw a line across the midsection of the continental United States (along the northern border of North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona, and continuing through southern Nevada and central California). More than 60 percent of the total United States population lives above what might be called "the tan line." Yet less than half of all divorces occur here, and each of the ten states with the lowest divorce rates is above the tan line.

Ironically, Teddy Kennedy's home state of Massachusetts is number one in marital stability. Donald Trump's New York is tied for second (and would have fared slightly better if Donald had not abandoned his first wife for a former winner of the Miss Resaca Beach, Georgia, bathing suit contest). Conversely, six of the seven states with the highest divorce rates are found below the tan line. And four of these six—Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee—are located right in the heart of the Bible belt.

The irony here, of course, is that the Bible is hardly neutral on the subject of divorce. The Old Testament prophet Malachi reports that God "hates divorce"; in the New Testament, Jesus condemns divorce "for any reason except sexual immorality." Given such teachings, one would expect a geographic

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region known for its devotion to the Bible to have lower rates of divorce.

The truth is, Scriptural teachings do appear to make a difference among the devout. According to data compiled by the National Opinion Research Center, the prevalence of divorce among weekly churchgoers in the United States is 17 percent. This is less than half that for people who claim "no religion" (37 percent) and well below the marital dissolution rate for people who attend religious services less than once a week (32 percent).

While frequency of church attendance is a reliable predictor of marital stability, it has little effect on state-by-state differences in divorce because the size of the weekly churchgoing population does not vary significantly by geographic region (except in the West, where attendance is lower and divorce higher). Religious affiliation, however, does have an effect on state-by-state differences. Catholics, Jews, and Mormons are less likely to divorce than Protestants. (Two in ten Catholics have been part of a failed marriage, while three in ten Protestants have experienced divorce.) Thus, one of the reasons for the relatively low divorce rates in the Northeast and Midwest is that these regions have a higher concentration of Catholics than other geographic areas.

According to author Michael McManus (a Protestant), the lower rate of divorce among Catholics reflects the fact that their parishes take the responsibility of marital support and counseling more seriously than Protestant churches. In his book *Marriage Savers*, McManus argues that "America's churches are part of the divorce problem." He notes that 73 percent of all weddings take place in a church, yet most ministers do not require couples to go through premarital counseling. Rather than being "blessing machines," McManus believes churches need to concentrate on offering premarital counseling and marriage enrichment programs like those sponsored by Marriage Encounter.

While the impressive track record of such programs underscores the value of religious teaching in reducing divorce, University of Texas sociologist Norval Glenn believes part of the reason for the correlation between lower divorce and high church attendance is that people involved in a local church are socially rooted. That is, they are integrated into a local network of cross-generational social relationships which offers them support and expects them to adopt certain norms of behavior and attitude (like the expectation that their marriage will not end in divorce).

Glenn believes couples enmeshed in such networks are far less likely to divorce than couples who are more socially isolated. Indeed, his research shows a strong correlation between residential movement and divorce—a connection he believes is due not just to the absence of social integration among transplanted married couples, but also to the fact that martial unions joined in transient geographic areas are often more unstable.

"Where there is a great deal of residential movement, persons on the 'marriage market' probably will not have as much information about the characteristics and background of one another as they would if most of them had lived in the same locality for a long time," Glenn notes. "A high level of residential movement," he adds, "is likely to increase the probability that persons with dissimilar backgrounds will marry."

Frequent mobility also increases the chances that a married individual will meet someone who seems more desirable than his or her current spouse, Glenn says. And it increases the likelihood that an individual in a troubled marriage will seek advice from someone who does not know the other spouse and cannot offer the kind of balanced perspective that is often needed to help resolve marital problems. Thus, one of the major reasons for high divorce rates in the Sunbelt is that this area of the country has experienced greater population growth and residential turnover than more stable areas in the Northeast and Midwest.

To be sure, there are other influences at work. For example, divorce rates are affected by the stringency of divorce law. Clearly, the liberalization of state divorce laws during the 1960's and 1970's helped fuel the dramatic surge in divorce that took place throughout the country during this period.

Policy considerations, however, have only a minor effect on regional differences in divorce because divorce laws do not vary considerably from state to state. The one exception is Nevada, which has the nation's most liberal divorce statute and (not coincidentally) a dramatically higher rate of divorce than any other state in the union. (A divorce can be obtained so quickly and easily in Nevada that some people establish temporary residence in the state for the expressed purpose of getting a divorce.)

In addition, regional differences in divorce are influenced by several demographic and cultural factors. Specifically, people in the Sunbelt tend to be slightly younger than people in the Northeast and Midwest (which has a modest effect on divorce rates since most divorces occur during the first seven to ten years of marriage). Southerners also tend to marry at a slightly younger age than Northeasterners (which is relevant because people who marry young are more likely to divorce). And Northeasterners are slightly less likely to marry than people in other regions (which reduces the size of the population that could get a divorce).

In many ways, it is too bad that high divorce rates cannot simply be attributed to the absence of professional baseball. For it would be far easier to expand the number of major league baseball teams than to adopt the sort of daunting reforms that would be needed to make a meaningful dent in the divorce rate.

But if we are serious about reducing divorce in this country—and we should be—then we should seek to overturn government policies that permit unilateral no-fault divorce. We should call for churches to encourage greater participation in premarital counseling, marriage enrichment, and community-building programs. We should implore businesses to reduce the volume of forced geographic transfers and job-related travel. And we should work diligently to change cultural attitudes about divorce, helping Americans see the long-term damage divorce causes.

Obviously, curbing divorce in America will not be easy. But a nation that still honors Lou Gehrig's heroic perseverance and still cherishes historic Wrigley Field ought to be able to regain its commitment to the time-honored ideal of marital permanence. We ought to be able to renew our vows "to love and to cherish, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, 'til death us do part." We ought to be able to find our way *home*.

William R. Mattox, Jr., is vice president for policy at the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C.

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The Pacific Legal Foundation

by Jim Christie

Only a few years ago prospects for the Sacramento-based Pacific Legal Foundation, the country's oldest "conservative" public interest law firm, hardly seemed promising. In 1986, PLF president and CEO Ronald Zumbrun decided to indulge in deficit spending to continue unpopular land use and takings litigation. The legacy of judicial activism from the 1960's and 70's was also hardly conducive to staff morale, recalls Zumbrun: "Our biggest problem over the years had been that the courts had presumed government was always correct."

That was, he says, "until *Nollan*." *Nollan* v. *California Coastal Commission*, one of the cases for which Zumbrun leveraged $300,000 in 1986, went in 1987 to the United States Supreme Court, which agreed with PLF that government agencies could not demand property as a condition for issuing permits. "Any time you lose in the Supreme Court, it is significant," says Ralph Faust, the commission's chief counsel, of the case. "It changed the way we do business."

Others, noting PLF's partisan ties, say the firm was simply in the right place at the right time. "The commission's leaning toward granting permits isn't so much because of *Nollan*, but because of [Republican Governors] Deukmejian and Wilson" providing conservative appointees, says Oakland sole practitioner Joe Brecher, who works on retainer for the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, a longtime PLF opponent. But a win means precedent. And as Faust says, the case "raised a lot of money."

PLF's budget today stands at about $4 million, twice what it was in 1986 and a quantum leap from the $110,000 Zumbrun launched the firm with in 1973. And now, coupled with precedents from *Nollan* and its 1992 sister case, *Lucas* v. *South Carolina Coastal Council*, PLF hopes a blitz of amicus filing against wetlands and endangered species regulations will stake out new legal territory for the property rights movement.

The opening shot came in August 1993, in *Sierra Club* v. *Kern County*, which is still waiting to be heard. PLF sided with the county when the Sierra Club sought to prevent the state Fish and Game Commission from dropping the Mojave Ground Squirrel from its threatened species list. The proposed "delisting," the first of its kind in the state since the Endangered Species Act of 1973, would open up considerable acreage in Kern County for development.

"Wetlands and endangered species regulations, although they have been around for years, have not been developed in their full regulatory glory," explains PLF trustee Thomas May, a partner in the San Diego firm of Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps. "Every time you see a new regulatory wave, there are more and more property rights activists." In other words, more potential clients and donors, which is a boon to the property rights movement but which leads opponents to counter that PLF's amicus strategy is just marketing fodder for business interests, which will amount to little in court if resources and talent are not focused. "The extent of their impact has been difficult to tell because they have been involved in so many cases indirectly," says Joel Reynolds, senior attorney in the Los Angeles office of the National Resources Defense Council.

And not just involved in land use cases. PLF has fought for term limits and against affirmative action, rent controls, gays in the military, and state university and bar fees directed to political activities. William Rusher, the retired publisher of *National Review* and a PLF trustee, recalls, "We recently represented a high school student who wanted to set up a Rush Limbaugh Club at school." The matter was quickly resolved. After a visit by PLF attorneys to the governing board of Alcalanes Union High School in Orinda, California, student Kurt Busboom won permission to set up the club on campus.

But it is land use that pays PLF's bills. And with more and more regulations on private property, PLF, says May, will no longer be dismissed as a tool of "rapacious developers." With $4 million in the bank, PLF will surely be able to continue its work. An image makeover is much more problematic. Even so, PLF has come far since the dark days before *Nollan*. "We have the experience, the legal precedent weapons, and the courts are listening to us," says Zumbrun. "We can do more in the next 20 years than we did in the past 20 years because we have a base *and* a springboard."

Indeed, the property rights movement gained important ground last June when the United States Supreme Court ruled in its favor in a crucial land use and property rights case in which PLF was named as a friend of the court. In a 5 to 4 decision, the Court in *Dolan* v. *City of Tigard* placed new limits on the ability of governments to require developers to set aside property for environmental uses. Writing for the majority, Chief Justice Rehnquist said, "We see no reason why the takings clause of the Fifth Amendment, as much a part of the Bill of Rights as the First Amendment, should be relegated to the status of a poor relation."

Turnabout is fair play, and the official reaction of attorneys in environmental groups echoed the dejection at PLF circa 1986. John Echeverria, general counsel of the Audubon Society, called the ruling "an extraordinary intrusion by the court into the authority of local government. It elevates the interest of property owners over the interest of the community as a whole."

Jim Christie writes from Seattle, Washington.

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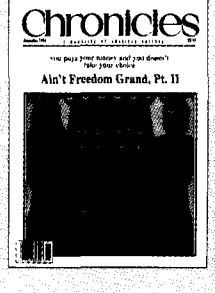

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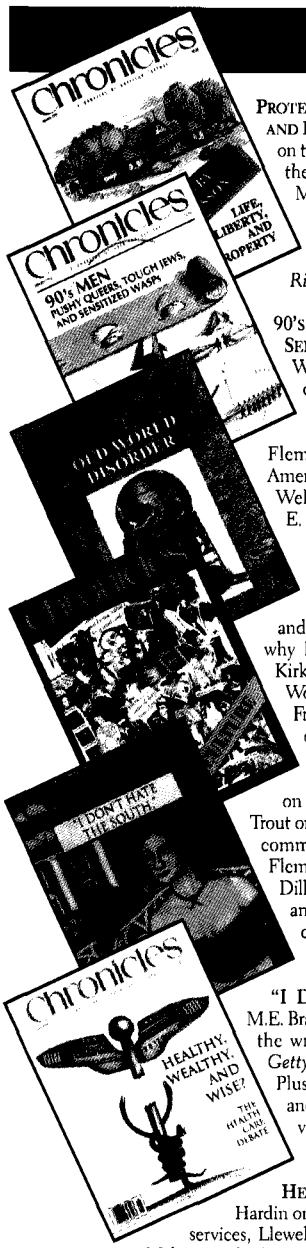


PROTECTED BY SMITH & WESSON: LIFE, LIBERTY, AND PROPERTY—January 1994—Thomas Fleming on the home as one's castle, Roger D. McGrath on the virtue of armed communities, and Richard Maxwell Brown on the "no duty to retreat" doctrine in American law. Plus Samuel Francis on the new populism and a review of Walter Laqueur's *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*.

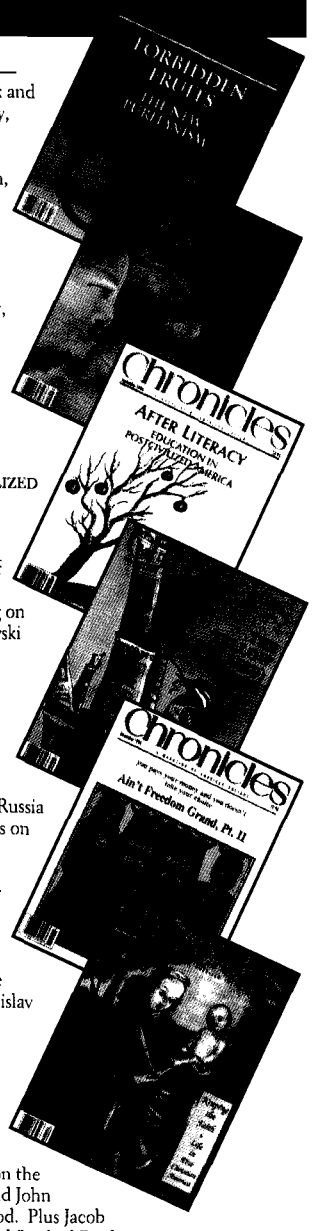
90'S MEN: PUSHY QUEERS, TOUGH JEWS, AND SENSITIZED WASPS—February 1994—Chilton Williamson, Jr., on the syphilization of American manhood, Harold O.J. Brown on the importance of sports, Paul Gottfried on the stereotypical Jewish male, and Thomas Fleming on the extermination of manliness in American culture. Plus Martin Mawyer on William Weld's empowerment of Queer Nation, and E. Christian Kopff's "Real Men's Studies."

OLD WORLD DISORDER—March 1994—W. Bruce Lincoln on the burden of Russian history, Curtis Cate on the United Nations and Third Balkan War, and Thomas Fleming on why Europe needs to grow up. Plus R. Cort Kirkwood on the Presidential Commission on Women in the Military and a review of Samuel Francis's *Beautiful Losers: Essays on the Failure of American Conservatism*.

POP CULTURE—April 1994—George Garrett on the sorry state of popular culture, Paul A. Trout on the 40th anniversary of *Fahrenheit 451* (with commentary from Ray Bradbury), and Thomas Fleming on tuning out technology. Plus R.H.W. Dillard on Federico Fellini, Bill Kauffman on rock and roll, Samuel Francis on *Star Trek* and the cultural elite, and William Norman Grigg on the new race war.

"I DON'T HATE THE SOUTH"—May 1994—M.E. Bradford on Donald Davidson, Fred Chappell on the writer's responsibility, J.O. Tate on the film *Gettysburg*, and William Pratt on Andrew Lytle. Plus Thomas Fleming on Southern chauvinism and Samuel Francis on the anniversary of *Brown v. The Board of Education*.

HEALTHY, WEALTHY AND WISE? THE HEALTH CARE DEBATE—June 1994—Garrett Hardin on why discrimination is needed in health care services, Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., on the AMA, Yuri N. Maltsev on the Soviet experience with socialized medicine, Thomas Fleming on the lack of a real health care debate, and Robert Weissberg on the death of natural causes.



FORBIDDEN FRUITS: THE NEW PURITANISM—July 1994—Thomas Fleming in praise of sex and violence, Samuel Francis on anarcho-tyranny, Philip Jenkins on the New Puritanism, and Sarah J. McCarthy on antiharassment and speech crime laws. Plus Chilton Williamson, Jr., on the violent West and Wayne Allensworth's review of Vladimir Zhirinovsky's *The Last Drive to the South*.

AMERICAN DILEMMAS—August 1994—Murray N. Rothbard on life in the Old Right, Eugene D. Genovese on black autonomy, Joseph Brown on "the other black history," and Bill Kauffman on Senator J. William Fulbright. Plus Thomas Fleming on equality vs. privilege and Samuel Francis on secessionist fantasies.

AFTER LITERACY: EDUCATION IN POSTCIVILIZED AMERICA—September 1994—John Lukacs on civilization vs. culture, Michael Gorman on technovandals and the future of libraries, Theodore Pappas on the nagging problem of plagiarism, and Stephen A. Erickson on the politics of education. Plus Thomas Fleming on the education of liberals and John Dombrowski on politically incorrect research.

THE YELLOW (BELLIED) PRESS—October 1994—Philip Jenkins on our free and gutless press, Erwin Knoll on the "liberal" media, Terry Przybylski on the *Chicago Tribune*, Alex N. Dragnich on Yugoslavia and the Western media, and Ewa M. Thompson on Russia and the American press. Plus Samuel Francis on the abortion gambit.

AIN'T FREEDOM GRAND, PT. II—November 1994—*Chronicles* interviews former California governor Jerry Brown, Richard Winger on restricting ballot access, Jeffrey Tucker on the third-party option, and Wayne Allensworth on the religious right. Plus Tomislav Sunic on video politics and Paul Foster's "Memoirs of a Reagan Hack."

KEEPING THE FAITH: LIFE IN POST-CHRISTIAN AMERICA—December 1994—Philip Jenkins on the radicalism in the Episcopal Church, Thomas Fleming on the case for religious boycotts, Thomas Molnar on the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and John Patrick Zmirak on AIDS and the wrath of God. Plus Jacob Neusner on the left's hijacking of Judaism and Sanford Pinsker on affirmative action and the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The Great Portcullis

In the third week of August someone pushes the button and brings summer to an end in the Mountain West, though beautiful weather and Indian summer lie ahead. Typically the change comes with the discharge of a powerful thunder cell, seemingly no different from any other electrical storm but collapsing into a gray leaden overcast instead of propelling itself onward through crystalline skies. The rains continue for a day or two, then cease. The skies clear, and nothing appears changed. But everything has changed.

Early in August, the birds begin to leave: some of the songbirds first, then the Canadian geese in military formation, and eventually the sandhill cranes, high-flying and confused as smoke, gathering only to twist apart again, cranking their rachitic cries distantly out of a cyanic sky. Pale underbodies nearly invisible against the sun's glare, they beat raggedly away toward the bosques of the Rio Grande south of Albuquerque, toward Mexico. By Labor Day Mexican, Basque, and Indian herders are driving the sheep down from the alpine meadows into the hills above the creeks and rivers, for sorting and then for trucking to their winter range. Early last September I went with the Thoman family to Kendall Bridge on the upper Green River 15 miles below the Green River Lakes. We slept over the night at camp and in the morning rode horseback up to a grassy park where Bill Thoman, his son Dick, and Dick's wife Susie, with the help of a pair of Indians, had arranged the steel panels trucked in by pickup to form a series of pens and a funnel of wire fence drawing to them. The herders drove the sheep at the funnel where they milled and climbed on one another, bleating, while Dick and Susie and their seven-year-old son Ben walked through them from the funnel's neck to its mouth, flailing at the animals with their coats to drive the flock more closely together still into the funnel as the Indians stood watching the dogs work and I sat my horse and now and then pushed back a straggler.

As the sheep passed singly along the narrow corridor formed by the panels, Bill worked the gate to deflect them into one or another of the pens: wethers, ewes, the large strong bucks, and the runty ones to be castrated. We seized the animals behind the front legs, threw them, sat them on their rumps like teddy bears, and held them while Dick twisted the tails off, and, operating with a penknife, slit the scrota and tore out the testes with his fingers; after he stepped aside, Mickey Thoman injected the sheep in the inner thigh with penicillin and daubed a disinfectant on the wounds, and Mary retrieved the sundered parts in a pan for lamb fries. When Dick had finished notching ears the herders pushed the bloodied sheep into the hills again, and we drove the bucks down to Kendall Bridge where the truck waited, a semi coupled to an aluminum stock trailer. The aspen jetted from the ground like yellow gas flames streaked with green, the parks bristled with the golden frost-killed grass, and beyond the meandering Green the northern abutment of the Wind River Range stood hugely in cross section, blocks of pink granite thrusting above a pedestal of black timber, tilting against a suddenly overcast sky, waiting for snow. That night a cold torrential rain fell driven by a shrieking wind; at dawn the tents were frozen stiff and a thick fog packed the valley. Driving home, I saw that the highest peaks—Gannett, Coolidge, Fremont—had received a dusting of snow, and by the time I arrived in Kemmerer late that afternoon the great and silent stillness of fall had embraced the town. Tom Eliot to the contrary, April is not the cruelest month.

The first snow, usually in the initial week of September, draws into the parched ground within hours, and for weeks afterward the sky remains remote and intensely blue. Out on the desert hunters pursue the wily antelope whose dark and globular eyes can read the number on your hunting permit from a distance of half a mile and whose sole means of defense is flight, at speeds to 40 miles an hour. Their tan and white coats make them fairly easy to spot at a distance; after selecting for height of horn above the ear, curve, and thickness, the hunter begins a stalk on his quarry that can last hours, or all day. He creeps up dry washes on hands and knees, crouches movelessly in excruciating positions behind small clumps of sagebrush, and crawls on his belly to the shaly verges of canyons over a carpet of prickly pear that deposits its fiery spines in the palms of his hands, in his chest, stomach, and legs before he has a chance to pull the trigger. Once while chasing a splendid buck I almost stepped on a large badger playing possum in the brush. Since I was too far from the prey for a shot and didn't want to spook him by appearing over the rise between us, I sat for a time with my rifle across my knees watching the badger, who presently opened one eye and then shut it quickly to convince me of the actuality of his demise. A wilderness of deep basins walled by steep cliffs striped red and white, mesas buttressed by masses of gray, green, and cream-colored clay like the fossilized feet of giant pachyderms, smooth golden hills separated by folds of lavender shadow, and juniper breaks growing upon islands of red sandstone rock—the desert stretches in every direction to the horizon and the far blue mountain ranges that triangulate it. The lone hunter, hearing the wind pass slant across his ears, observing the dust devils run twisting over the sagebrush plain, and feeling in his bones the acute emptiness of fall, knows that he is precisely that: alone.

Before the Wyoming Game and Fish Department split the deer and elk seasons from each other ten years ago, moving up the deer hunt to the first two weeks of October, I made a fishing trip to western Montana every fall before returning home for elk camp. By early

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October the tourists are gone from the Yellowstone and have been replaced by flocks of waterfowl without number, blackening the glassy surface of Yellowstone Lake. Trout feed ravenously before winter, and the fishing is superb. A dozen years ago my wife and I, hurrying to make Rock Creek near Philipsburg, Montana, for the night, called it quits at Hebgen Lake on the Madison River around nine o'clock and followed a jeep track away from the highway into a timbered gulch. We pitched the tent in the darkness at the edge of a small clearing, crawled in, and fell immediately asleep. At a little past two in the morning I was wakened by the sound of padding feet around the tent; clockwise, counter-, then clockwise again. I reached for the .41 Magnum hogleg by my side and quietly woke Norma. "What is it?" "We have a bear in camp." "Are you sure it wasn't me snoring?" "That's what I thought. It's not you. Listen." We listened together, Norma still on her back in her bag, I sitting upright as the bear continued to investigate us. After a time we heard him no more, and I fell asleep with the gun on my chest. In the light of morning, we discovered that we had raised the tent beside a well-used game trail going down to the creek a quarter of a mile away.

On Rock Creek, casting a Number 6 Bitch Creek Nymph from a Number Eight fly rod, I caught five fat and shining trout from 18 to 22 inches long between six and six-thirty on a single evening while watching a black sow bear eat berries as her two cubs played along a log on the opposite bank of the stream. I released all but the best two, disassembled the rod, and drove back to camp on the trail above the water's edge in the gathering darkness from which a brightness appeared, like that of a distant city in flames. Reaching camp a half-mile farther on, I found it spectacularly illuminated by a tremendous bonfire of resinous stumps and logs that Norma had built for a bear fire, not trusting to the .41 I had left with her. Late in the afternoon she had witnessed two more bears scrambling along the talus slope on our side of the river, and decided on the fire as the more reliable form of protection.

But western Montana, despite its great and still largely unspoiled beauty, is a disquieting place. Thomas McGuane, the novelist, has his talent, his money, his cutting horses, and his lovely wife: why does he need also his cretinous and sybaritic Hollywood friends, to whom he has sold property in the neighborhood of his ranch in McCloud ? Today, you can saunter down the main street of Big Timber and see Whoopee Goldberg jump on her horse and gallop off to arrest a gang of white supremacists holed up in the mountains nearby. Not far away, Ted Turner and Jane Fonda have bought a ranch, torn down the previous owner's barbed-wire fence (made by the bloody sweat of his brow), and overrun first-rate cattle range with a herd of woolly, pig-eyed, motheaten, and brucellosis-infected bison. And the once simple and pleasant town of Missoula is a polyglot mess now, filled with hippies, yuppies, environmentalist groupies, second-home owners, professors, and students; the lovely Bitterroot Valley subdivided almost as far as the pass.

We of Kemmerer, Wyoming, should feel slighted: the Californians love us not for ourselves, nor for our sagebrush-and-bentonite scenery, but for the usually thriving deer population in the surrounding desert hills. By late September they have begun to arrive in Winnebagos towing jeeps and ATV's chained to flatbed trailers. Those that do not camp in the hills do so in town, bleeding out their kill in the bathtubs in their motel rooms. Last fall we saw very few of them, word of the crash of the southwestern Wyoming deer population apparently having reached Greater Los Angeles. Those that did come got here in time to experience the conclusion of the drought, which broke at last on the first day of October with torrential rains, six inches of snow in the high country, and a foot of mud in the roadbeds.

Four seasons ago, encouraged by the fine Indian Summer afternoon and optimistic weather forecasts, I overrode my better judgment and parked the truck and horse trailer at Fontenelle Crossing rather than drive the six miles on to the gravel road at La Barge Creek. The rain directly followed the morning hunt the next day and continued until dark. The morning after broke clear and warm with a springtime softness in the air, the kind of weather that makes experienced hunters nervous. My partner was expected at work at two o'clock in Kemmerer. We struck camp, loaded the horses, and had ridden out a quarter of an hour when the snow began to fall. At the crossing it was raining, the road a morass. We unloaded the gear into the truck bed, uncoupled the trailer, forded the creek on horseback, and rode on to Kovaches' camp, where they agreed to keep the horses through the week if necessary; one of the sons took us by jeep back to the truck. When I had driven a few hundred yards, it became obvious that four-wheel drive alone was not going to get the job done; we climbed down into the cold mud and lay on our backs in it, adjusting and hooking the tire chains around all four tires. Then we drove on at ten and fifteen miles an hour toward town, forty-five miles away. Some years before another hunting party, driven out of the mountains by storm, found the same road covered by two and a half feet of snow. They took turns digging ahead of themselves with shovels, then butting the cut with the lead truck to further their progress. In this way, the convoy made the ploughed road at Krall's ranch, seven miles distant, in two days.

In summer the mountains are a second, infinitely expansive, home; from early fall until the following summer they are a likely ambush, a potential trap. Always by elk season the hunter is himself the prey. That high overcast, that slight shift in the direction of the wind: these are among the signs that danger threatens. Looking up the black spires of the trees to the cliff face that appears to be falling constantly backward beneath the forward-moving sky, one feels in the pale light, the cold shadow, a sense of the country against him, and something like fear.

The day after the first winter storm has dropped several feet of snow in the mountains, the elk migrate by the hundreds from the high country toward their seasonal range, bounding down from the timbered slopes through chest-deep powder, across Fontenelle Creek, and over the sagebrush flats. In the collective rush they are oblivious to the hunters who have their choice of three, five, seven trophy bulls to shoot out of the herds in a scene that is reminiscent of the 19th-century slaughters and ends with a dozen gut piles steaming in the trampled and bloody snow. It is an easy way to hunt elk, if your timing is right and your luck good. Also your battery. What that late October storm means is that someone has punched the second button, and the Great Portcullis has begun its descent. You do not want to be caught on the wrong side of it.

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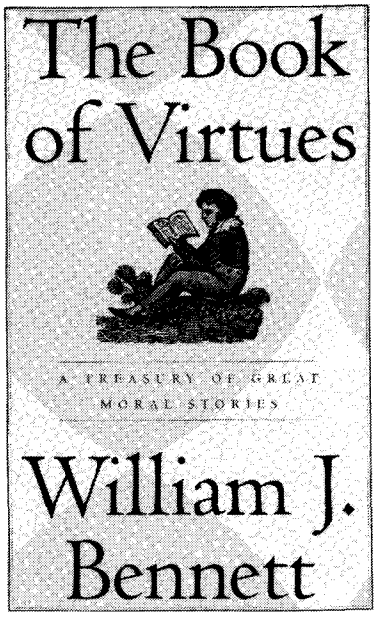

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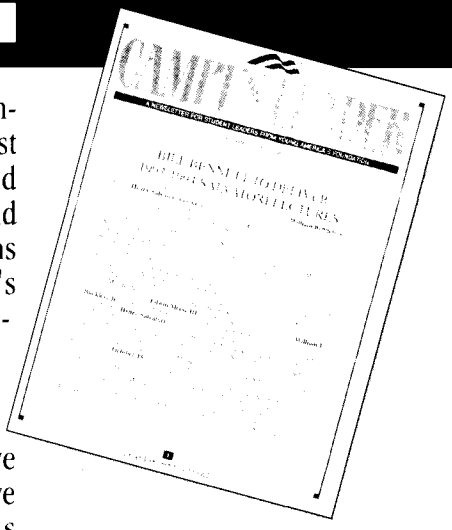

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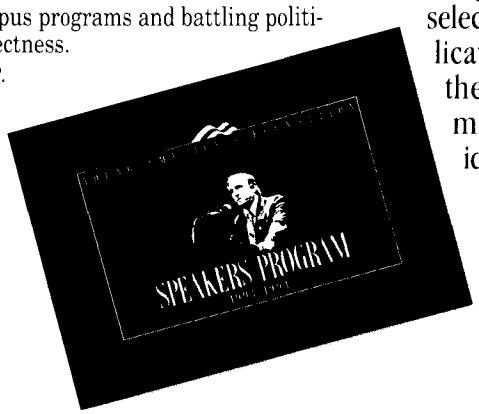

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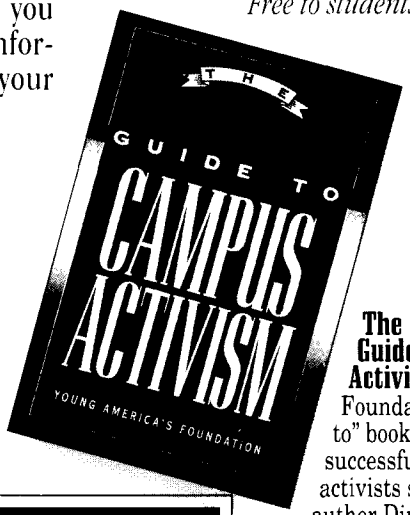

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